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A STRANGE STORY

AND

THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS

BY

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PREFACE.

Of the many illustrious thinkers whom the schools of France have contributed to the intellectual philosophy of our age, Victor Cousin, the most accomplished, assigns to Maine de Biran the rank of the most original.

In the successive developments of his own mind, Maine de Biran may, indeed, be said to represent the change that has been silently at work throughout the general mind of Europe since the close of the last century. He begins his career of philosopher with blind faith in Condillac and Materialism. As an intellect severely conscientious in the pursuit of truth expands amidst the perplexities it revolves, phenomena which cannot be accounted for by Condillac's sensuous theories open to his eye. To the first rudimentary life of man, the animal life, "characterized by impressions, appetites, movements, organic in their origin and ruled by the Law of Necessity," * he is compelled to add "the second or human life, from which Free-will and Self-consciousness emerge." He thus arrives at the union of mind and matter; but still a something is wanted—some key to the marvels which neither of these conditions of vital being suffices to explain. And at last the grand self-completing Thinker attains to the Third Life of Man in Man's Soul.

"There are not," says this philosopher, towards the close of his last and loftiest work—"There are not only two principles opposed to each other in Man, there are three. For there are in him three lives and three orders of faculties. Though all should be in accord and in harmony between the sensitive and the active faculties which constitute Man, there would still be a nature superior, a third life which would not be satisfied; which would make felt (*ferait sentir*) the truth that there is another happiness, another wisdom, another perfection, at once above the greatest human happiness, above the highest wisdom, or intellectual and moral perfection of which the human being is susceptible." †

Now, as Philosophy and Romance both take their origin in the Principle of Wonder, so in the Strange Story submitted to the Public, it will be seen that Romance, through the freest exercise of its wildest vagaries, conducts its bewildered hero towards the same goal to which Philosophy leads its luminous Student, through far grander portents of Nature, far higher visions of Supernatural Power, than Fable can yield to Fancy. That goal is defined in these noble words: "The relations (*rapports*) which exist between the elements and the products of the three lives of Man are the subjects of meditation, the fairest and finest, but also the most difficult. The Stoic Philosophy shows us all which can be most elevated in active life; but it makes abstraction of the animal nature, and absolutely fails to recognize all which belongs to the life of the spirit. Its practical morality is beyond the forces of humanity. Christianity alone embraces the whole Man. It dissimulates none of the sides of his nature, and avails itself of his miseries and

* Œuvres inédites de Maine de Biran, vol. i. See Introduction.

† Œuvres inédites de Maine de Biran, vol. iii., p. 546 (Anthropologie).

his weakness in order to conduct him to his end in showing him all the want that he has of a succor more exalted." *

In the passages thus quoted, I imply one of the objects for which this tale has been written; and I cite them with a wish to acknowledge one of those priceless obligations which writings the lightest and most fantastic often incur to reasoners the most serious and profound.

But I here construct a romance which should have, as a romance, some interest for the general reader. I do not elaborate a treatise submitted to the logic of sages. And it is only when "in fairy fiction drest" that Romance gives admission to "truths severe."

I venture to assume that none will question my privilege to avail myself of the marvellous agencies which have ever been at the legitimate command of the fabulist.

To the highest form of romantic narrative, the Epic, critics indeed, have declared that a supernatural machinery is indispensable. That the Drama has availed itself of the same license as the Epic, it would be unnecessary to say to the countrymen of Shakespeare, or to the generation that is yet studying the enigmas of Goethe's "Faust." Prose Romance has immemorially asserted, no less than the Epic or the Drama, its heritage in the Realm of the Marvellous. The interest which attaches to the supernatural is sought in the earliest Prose Romance which modern times take from the ancient, and which, perhaps, had its origin in the lost Novels of Miletus; † and the right to invoke such interest has, ever since, been maintained by Romance through all varieties of form and fancy—from the majestic epopee of Télémaque to the graceful phantasies of "Undine," or the mighty mockeries of "Gulliver's Travels," down to such comparatively commonplace elements of wonder as yet preserve from oblivion the "Castle of Otranto" and the "Old English Baron."

Now, to my mind the true reason why a supernatural agency is indispensable to the conception of the Epic, is that the Epic is the highest and the completest form in which Art can express either Man or Nature, and that without some gleams of the supernatural, Man is not man, nor Nature, nature.

It is said, by a writer to whom an eminent philosophical critic justly applies the epithets of "pious and profound:" ‡ "It is unreasonable to confess that we believe in God, not by reason of the Nature which conceals Him, but by reason of the Supernatural in Man which alone reveals and proves Him to exist? . . . Man reveals God: for Man, by his intelligence, rises above Nature: and in virtue of this intelligence is conscious of himself as a power not only independent of, but opposed to, Nature, and capable of resisting, conquering, and controlling her." §

If the meaning involved in the argument of which I have here made but scanty extracts be carefully studied, I think that we shall find deeper reasons than the critics who dictated canons of taste to the last century discovered—why the supernatural is indispensable to the Epic, and why it is allowable to all works of imagination, in which Art looks on Nature with Man's inner sense of a something beyond and above her.

But the Writer who, whether in verse or prose, would avail himself of such sources of pity or terror as flow from the Marvellous, can only attain his ob-

* Œuvres inédites de Maine de Biran, vol. iii. p. 524.

† The Golden Ass of Apuleius.

‡ Sir William Hamilton. "Lectures on Metaphysics," p. 40.

§ Jacobi—*Von der Göttlichen Dingen: Werke*, p. 424-6.

ject in proportion as the wonders he narrates are of a kind to excite the curiosity of the age he addresses.

In the brains of our time, the faculty of *Causation* is very markedly developed. People, nowadays, do not delight in the Marvellous according to the old childlike spirit. They say in one breath "Very extraordinary!" and in the next breath, ask, "How do you account for it?" If the Author of this work has presumed to borrow from science some elements of interest for Romance, he ventures to hope that no thoughtful reader—and certainly no true son of science—will be disposed to reproach him. In fact, such illustrations from the masters of Thought were essential to the completion of the purpose which prevades the work.

That purpose, I trust, will develop itself in proportion as the story approaches the close; and whatever may appear violent or melodramatic in the catastrophe, will perhaps be found, by a reader capable of perceiving the various symbolical meanings conveyed in the story, essential to the end in which those meanings converge, and towards which the incidents that give them the character and interest of fiction have been planned and directed from the commencement.

Of course, according to the most obvious principles of art, the narrator of a fiction must be as thoroughly in earnest as if he were the narrator of facts. One could not tell the most extravagant fairy-tale so as to rouse and sustain the attention of the most infantine listener, if the tale were told as if the tale-teller did not believe in it. But when the reader lays down this Strange Story, perhaps he will detect through all the haze of Romance, the outlines of these images suggested to his reason: "Firstly, the image of sensuous, soulless Nature, such as the Materialist had conceived it. Secondly, the image of Intellect, obstinately separating all its inquiries from the belief in the spiritual essence and destiny of man, and incurring all kinds of perplexity and resorting to all kinds of visionary speculation before it settles at last into the simple faith which unites the philosopher and the infant. And, Thirdly, the image of the erring but pure-thoughted visionary, seeking over much on this earth to separate soul from mind, till innocence itself is led astray by a phantom, and reason is lost in the space between earth and the stars. Whether in these pictures there may be any truth worth the implying, every reader must judge for himself; and if he doubt or deny that there be any such truth, still, in that process of thought which the doubt or denial enforces, he may chance on a truth which it pleases himself to discover.

"Most of the Fables of Æsop"—thus says Montaigne in his charming essay "Of Books" *—"have several senses and meanings, of which the mythologists choose some one that tallies with the fable. But for the most part 'tis only what presents itself at the first view, and is superficial; there being others more lively, essential, and internal into which they have not been able to penetrate; and"—adds Montaigne—"the case is the very same with me."

* Translation 1776, vol. ii, p. 103.

A STRANGE STORY.

CHAPTER I.

In the year 18— I settled as a physician at one of the wealthiest of our great English towns, which I will designate by the initial L——. I was yet young, but I had acquired some reputation by a professional work, which is, I believe, still amongst the received authorities on the subject of which it treats. I had studied at Edinburgh and at Paris, and had borne away from both those illustrious schools of medicine whatever guarantees for future distinction the praise of professors may concede to the ambition of students. On becoming a member of the College of Physicians, I made a tour of the principal cities of Europe, taking letters of introduction to eminent medical men; and gathering from many theories and modes of treatment, hints to enlarge the foundations of unprejudiced and comprehensive practice. I had resolved to fix my ultimate residence in London. But before this preparatory tour was completed, my resolve was changed by one of those unexpected events which determine the fate man in vain would work out for himself. In passing through the Tyrol, on my way into the north of Italy, I found in a small inn, remote from medical attendance, an English traveller, seized with acute inflammation of the lungs, and in a state of imminent danger. I devoted myself to him night and day; and, perhaps, more through careful nursing than active remedies, I had the happiness to effect his complete recovery. The traveller proved to be Julius Faber, a physician of great distinction, contented to reside, where he was born, in the provincial city of L——, but whose reputation as a profound and original pathologist was widely spread; and whose writings had formed no unimportant part of my special studies. It was during a short holiday excursion, from which he was about to return with renovated vigor, that he had been thus stricken down. The patient so accidentally met with became the founder of

my professional fortunes. He conceived a warm attachment for me: perhaps the more affectionate because he was a childless bachelor, and the nephew who would succeed to his wealth evinced no desire to succeed to the toils by which the wealth had been acquired. Thus, having an heir for the one, he had long looked about for an heir to the other, and now resolved on finding that heir in me. So, when we parted, Dr. Faber made me promise to correspond with him regularly, and it was not long before he disclosed by letter the plans he had formed in my favor. He said that he was growing old; his practice was beyond his strength; he needed a partner; he was not disposed to put up to sale the health of patients whom he had learned to regard as his children; money was no object to him, but it was an object close at his heart that the humanity he had served, and the reputation he had acquired, should suffer no loss in his choice of a successor. In fine, he proposed that I should at once come to L—— as his partner, with the view of succeeding to his entire practice at the end of two years, when it was his intention to retire.

The opening into fortune thus afforded to me was one that rarely presents itself to a young man entering upon an overcrowded profession. And to an aspirant less allured by the desire of fortune than the hope of distinction, the fame of the physician who thus generously offered to me the inestimable benefits of his long experience and his cordial introduction, was in itself an assurance that a metropolitan practice is not essential to a national renown.

I went, then, to L——, and before the two years of my partnership had expired, my success justified my kind friend's selection, and far more than realized my own expectations. I was fortunate in effecting some notable cures in the earliest cases submitted to me, and it is everything in the career of a physician when good luck wins betimes for him that confidence which patients rarely accord except to lengthened experience. To the rapid facility with which my way was made, some circumstances apart from professional skill probably contributed. I was saved from the suspicion of a medical adventurer by the accidents of birth and fortune. I belonged to an ancient family (a branch of the once powerful border clan of the Fenwicks) that had for many generations held a fair estate in the neighborhood of Windermere. As an only son I had succeeded to that estate on attaining my majority, and had sold it to pay off the debts which had been made by my father, who had the costly tastes of an antiquary and collector. The residue on

the sale insured me a modest independence apart from the profits of a profession; and as I had not been legally bound to defray my father's debts, so I obtained that character for disinterestedness and integrity which always in England tends to propitiate the public to the successes achieved by industry or talent. Perhaps, too, any professional ability I might possess was the more readily conceded, because I had cultivated with assiduity the sciences and the scholarship which are collaterally connected with the study of medicine. Thus, in a word, I established a social position which came in aid of my professional repute, and silenced much of that envy which usually embitters and sometimes impedes success.

Dr Faber retired at the end of the two years agreed upon. He went abroad; and being, though advanced in years, of a frame still robust, and habits of mind still inquiring and eager, he commenced a lengthened course of foreign travel, during which our correspondence, at first frequent, gradually languished, and finally died away.

I succeeded at once to the larger part of the practice which the labors of thirty years had secured to my predecessor. My chief rival was a Dr. Lloyd, a benevolent, fervid man, not without genius, if genius be present where judgment is absent: not without science, if that may be science which fails in precision. One of those clever, desultory men who, in adopting a profession, do not give up to it the whole force and heat of their minds. Men of that kind habitually accept a mechanical routine, because in the exercise of their ostensible calling their imaginative faculties are drawn away to pursuits more alluring. Therefore, in their proper vocation they are seldom bold or inventive: out of it they are sometimes both to excess. And when they do take up a novelty in their own profession they cherish it with an obstinate tenacity, and an extravagant passion, unknown to those quiet philosophers who take up novelties every day, examine them with the sobriety of practised eyes, to lay down altogether, modify in part, or accept in whole, according as inductive experiment supports or destroys conjecture.

Dr. Lloyd had been esteemed a learned naturalist long before he was admitted to be a tolerable physician. Amidst the privations of his youth he had contrived to form, and with each succeeding year he had perseveringly increased, a zoological collection of creatures, not alive, but, happily for the beholder, stuffed or embalmed. From what I have said, it will be truly inferred that Dr. Lloyd's earlier career as a physician had not been brilliant; but of late years he had gradually rather *aged*,

than worked himself, into that professional authority and station, which time confers on a thoroughly respectable man, whom no one is disposed to envy, and all are disposed to like.

Now in L—— there were two distinct social circles. That of the wealthy merchants and traders, and that of a few privileged families inhabiting a part of the town aloof from the marts of commerce, and called the Abbey Hill. These superb Areopagites exercised over the wives and daughters of the inferior citizens to whom all of L——, except the Abbey Hill, owed its prosperity, the same kind of mysterious influence which the fine ladies of Mayfair and Belgravia are reported to hold over the female denizens of Bloomsbury and Marylebone.

Abbey Hill was not opulent; but it was powerful by a concentration of its resources in all matters of patronage. Abbey Hill had its own milliner and its own draper, its own confectioner, butcher, baker, and tea-dealer; and the patronage of Abbey Hill was like the patronage of royalty, less lucrative in itself than as a solemn certificate of general merit. The shops on which Abbey Hill conferred its custom were certainly not the cheapest, possibly not the best; but they were undeniably the most imposing. The proprietors were decorously pompous, the shopmen superciliously polite. They could not be more so if they had belonged to the State, and been paid by a public which they benefited and despised. The ladies of Low Town (as the city subjacent to the Hill had been styled from a date remote in the feudal ages) entered those shops with a certain awe, and left them with a certain pride. There they had learned what the Hill approved. There they had bought what the Hill had purchased. It is much in this life to be quite sure that we are in the right, whatever that conviction may cost us. Abbey Hill had been in the habit of appointing, amongst other objects of patronage, its own physician. But that habit had fallen into disuse during the latter years of my predecessor's practice. His superiority over all other medical men in the town had become so incontestable, that, though he was emphatically the doctor of Low Town, the head of its hospitals and infirmaries, and by birth related to its principal traders, still as Abbey Hill was occasionally subject to the physical infirmities of meaner mortals, so on those occasions it deemed it best not to push the point of honor to the wanton sacrifice of life. Since Low Town possessed one of the most famous physicians in England, Abbey Hill magnanimously resolved not to crush him by a rival. Abbey Hill let him feel its pulse.

When my predecessor retired, I had presumptuously expected that the Hill would have continued to suspend its normal right to a special physician, and shown to me the same generous favor it had shown to him, who had declared me worthy to succeed to his honors. I had the more excuse for this presumption because the Hill had already allowed me to visit a fair proportion of its invalids, had said some very gracious things to me about the great respectability of the Fenwick family, and sent me some invitations to dinner, and a great many invitations to tea.

But my self-conceit received a notable check. Abbey Hill declared that the time had come to reassert its dormant privilege; it must have a doctor of its own choosing—a doctor who might, indeed, be permitted to visit Low Town from motives of humanity or gain, but who must emphatically assert his special allegiance to Abbey Hill by fixing his home on that venerable promontory. Miss Brabazon, a spinster of uncertain age, but undoubted pedigree, with small fortune, but high nose, which she would pleasantly observe was a proof of her descent from Humphrey Duke of Gloucester (with whom, indeed, I have no doubt, in spite of chronology, that she very often dined), was commissioned to inquire of me diplomatically, and without committing Abbey Hill too much by the overture, whether I would take a large and antiquated mansion, in which abbots were said to have lived many centuries ago, and which was still popularly styled Abbots' House, situated on the verge of the Hill, as in that case the "Hill" would think of me.

"It is a large house for a single man, I allow," said Miss Brabazon candidly; and then added, with a sidelong glance of alarming sweetness, "But when Dr. Fenwick has taken his true position (so old a family!) amongst us, he need not long remain single, unless he prefer it."

I replied, with more asperity than the occasion called for, that I had no thought of changing my residence at present. And if the Hill wanted me, the Hill must send for me.

Two days afterwards Dr. Lloyd took Abbots' House, and in less than a week was proclaimed medical adviser to the Hill. The election had been decided by the fiat of a great lady, who reigned supreme on the sacred eminence, under the name and title of Mrs. Colonel Poyntz.

"Dr. Fenwick," said this lady, "is a clever young man and a gentleman, but he gives himself airs—the Hill does not allow any airs but its own. Besides, he is a new-comer: resistance to new-comers, and, indeed, to all things new, except caps and

novels, is one of the bonds that keep old established societies together. Accordingly, it is by my advice that Dr. Lloyd has taken Abbots' House; the rent would be too high for his means if the Hill did not feel bound in honor to justify the trust he has placed in its patronage. I told him that all my friends, when they were in want of a doctor, would send for him; those who are my friends will do so. What the Hill does, plenty of common people down *there* will do also: so that question is settled!" And it was settled.

Dr Lloyd, thus taken by the hand, soon extended the range of his visits beyond the Hill, which was not precisely a mountain of gold to doctors, and shared with myself, though in a comparatively small degree, the much more lucrative practice of Low Town.

I had no cause to grudge his success, nor did I. But to my theories of medicine his diagnosis was shallow, and his prescriptions obsolete. When we were summoned to a joint consultation, our views as to the proper course of treatment seldom agreed. Doubtless he thought I ought to have deferred to his seniority in years; but I held the doctrine which youth deems a truth and age a paradox, namely, that in science the young men are the practical elders, inasmuch as they are schooled in the latest experiences science has gathered up, while their seniors are cramped by the dogmas they were schooled to believe when the world was some decades the younger.

Meanwhile my reputation continued rapidly to advance; it became more than local; my advice was sought even by patients from the metropolis. That ambition which, conceived in early youth, had decided my career and sweetened all its labors—the ambition to take a rank and leave a name as one of the great pathologists, to whom humanity accords a grateful, if calm, renown—saw before it a level field and a certain goal.

I know not whether a success far beyond that usually attained at the age I had reached served to increase, but it seemed to myself to justify, the main characteristic of my moral organization,—intellectual pride.

Though mild and gentle to the sufferers under my care, as a necessary element of professional duty, I was intolerant of contradiction from those who belonged to my calling, or even from those who, in general opinion, opposed my favorite theories.

I had espoused a school of medical philosophy severely rigid in its inductive logic. My creed was that of stern materialism.

I had a contempt for the understanding of men who accepted with credulity what they could not explain by reason. My favorite phrase was "common-sense." At the same time I had no prejudice against bold discovery, and discovery necessitates conjecture, but I dismissed as idle all conjecture that could not be brought to a practical test.

As in medicine I had been the pupil of Broussais, so in metaphysics I was the disciple of Condillac. I believed with that philosopher that "all our knowledge we owe to Nature; that in the beginning we can only instruct ourselves through her lessons, and that the whole art of reasoning consists in continuing as she has compelled us to commence." Keeping natural philosophy apart from the doctrines of revelation, I never assailed the last, but I contended that by the first no accurate reasoner could arrive at the existence of the soul as a third principle of being equally distinct from mind and body. That by a miracle man might live again, was a question of faith and not of understanding. I left faith to religion, and banished it from philosophy. How define with a precision to satisfy the logic of philosophy what was to live again? The body? We know that the body rests in its grave till by the process of decomposition its elemental parts enter into other forms of matter. The mind? But the mind was as clearly the result of the bodily organization as the music of the harpsichord is the result of the instrumental mechanism. The mind shared the decrepitude of the body in extreme old age, and in the full vigor of youth a sudden injury to the brain might forever destroy the intellect of a Plato or a Shakspeare. But the third principle—the soul—the something lodged within the body, which yet was to survive it? Where was that soul hidden out of the ken of the anatomist? When philosophers attempted to define it, were they not compelled to confound its nature and its actions with those of the mind? Could they reduce it to the mere moral sense, varying according to education, circumstances, and physical constitution? But even the moral sense in the most virtuous of men may be swept away by a fever. Such at the time I now speak of were the views I held. Views certainly not original nor pleasing; but I cherished them with as fond a tenacity as if they had been consolatory truths of which I was the first discoverer. I was intolerant to those who maintained opposite doctrines; despised them as irrational, or disliked them as insincere. Certainly if I had fulfilled the career which my ambition predicted—become the founder of a new school in pathology, and summed up my theories in academi-

cal lectures, I should have added another authority, however feeble, to the sects which circumscribe the interest of man to the life that has its close in his grave.

Possibly that which I have called my intellectual pride was more nourished than I should have been willing to grant by the self-reliance which an unusual degree of physical power is apt to bestow. Nature had blessed me with the thews of an athlete. Among the hardy youths of the Northern Athens I had been pre-eminently distinguished for feats of activity and strength. My mental labors, and the anxiety which is inseparable from the conscientious responsiblities of the medical profession, kept my health below par of the keen enjoyment, but had in no way diminished my rare muscular force. I walked through the crowd with the firm step and lofty crest of the mailed knight of old, who felt himself, in his casement of iron, a match against numbers. Thus the sense of a robust individuality, strong alike in disciplined reason and animal vigor, habituated to aid others, needing no aid for itself, contributed to render me imperious in will and arrogant in opinion. Nor were such defects injurious to me in my profession; on the contrary, aided as they were by a calm manner, and a presence not without that kind of dignity which is the livery of self-esteem, they served to impose respect and to inspire trust.

CHAPTER II.

I HAD been about six years at L—— when I became suddenly involved in a controversy with Dr. Lloyd. Just as this ill-fated man appeared at the culminating point of his professional fortunes, he had the imprudence to proclaim himself not only an enthusiastic advocate of mesmerism, as a curative process, but an ardent believer of the reality of somnambular clairvoyance as an invaluable gift of certain privileged organizations. To these doctrines I sternly opposed myself; the more sternly, perhaps, because on these doctrines Dr. Lloyd founded an argument for the existence of soul, independent of mind, as of matter, and built thereon a superstructure of physiological fantasies, which, could it be substantiated, would replace every system of metaphysics on which recognized philosophy condescends to dispute.

About two years before he became a disciple rather of Puysegur than Mesmer (for Mesmer had little faith in that gift of clairvoyance of which Puysegur was, I believe, at least in mod-

ern times, the first audacious asserter), Dr. Lloyd had been afflicted with the loss of a wife many years younger than himself, and to whom he had been tenderly attached. And this bereavement, in directing the hopes that consoled him to a world beyond the grave, had served perhaps to render him more credulous of the phenomena in which he greeted additional proofs of purely spiritual existence. Certainly, if, in controverting the notions of another physiologist, I had restricted myself to that fair antagonism which belongs to scientific disputants, anxious only for the truth, I should need no apology for sincere conviction and honest argument; but when, with condescending good-nature, as if to a man much younger than himself, who was ignorant of the phenomena which he nevertheless denied, Dr. Lloyd invited me to attend his *séances* and witness his cures, my *amour propre* became roused and settled, and it seemed to me necessary to put down what I asserted to be too gross an outrage on common-sense to justify the ceremony of examination. I wrote, therefore, a small pamphlet on the subject, in which I exhausted all the weapons that irony can lend to contempt. Dr. Lloyd replied, and as he was no very skilful arguer, his reply injured him perhaps more than my assault. Meanwhile, I had made some inquiries as to the moral character of his favorite clairvoyants. I imagined that I had learned enough to justify me in treating them as flagrant cheats, and himself as their egregious dupe.

Low Town soon ranged itself, with very few exceptions, on my side. The Hill at first seemed disposed to rally round its insulted physician, and to make the dispute a party question, in which the Hill would have been signally worsted, when suddenly the same lady paramount, who had secured to Dr. Lloyd the smile of the Eminence, spoke forth against him, and the Eminence frowned.

"Dr. Lloyd," said the Queen of the Hill, "is an amiable creature, but on this subject decidedly cracked. Cracked poets may be all the better for being cracked; cracked doctors are dangerous. Besides, in deserting that old-fashioned routine, his adherence to which made his claim to the Hill's approbation, and unsettling the mind of the Hill with wild revolutionary theories, Dr. Lloyd has betrayed the principles on which the Hill itself rests its social foundations. Of those principles Dr. Fenwick has made himself champion; and the Hill is bound to support him. There, the question is settled!"

And it was settled.

From the moment Mrs. Colonel Poyntz thus issued the

word of command, Dr. Lloyd was demolished. His practice was gone, as well as his repute. Mortification or anger brought on him a stroke of paralysis which, disabling my opponent, put an end to our controversy. An obscure Dr. Jones, who had been the special pupil and *protégé* of Dr. Lloyd, offered himself as a candidate for the Hill's tongues and pulses. The Hill gave him little encouragement. It once more suspended its electoral privileges, and, without insisting on calling me up to it, the Hill quietly called me in whenever its health needed other advice than that of its visiting apothecary. Again it invited me, sometimes to dinner, often to tea. And again, Miss Brabazon assured me by a sidelong glance that it was no fault of hers if I were still single.

I had almost forgotten the dispute which had obtained for me so conspicuous a triumph, when one winter's night I was roused from sleep by a summons to attend Dr. Lloyd, who, attacked by a second stroke a few hours previously, had, on recovering sense, expressed a vehement desire to consult the rival by whom he had suffered so severely. I dressed myself in haste and hurried to his house.

A February night, sharp and bitter. An iron-gray frost below, a spectral, melancholy moon above. I had to ascend the Abbey Hill by a steep, blind lane between high walls. I passed through stately gates, which stood wide open, into the garden ground that surrounded the old Abbots' House. At the end of a short carriage-drive, the dark and gloomy building cleared itself from leafless, skeleton trees; the moon resting keen and cold on its abrupt gables and lofty chimney-stacks. An old woman-servant received me at the door, and, without saying a word, led me through a long, low hall, and up dreary oak stairs, to a broad landing at which she paused for a moment, listening. Round and about hall, staircase, and landing were ranged the dead specimens of the savage world which it had been the pride of the naturalist's life to collect. Close where I stood yawned the open jaws of the fell anaconda, its lower coils hidden, as they rested on the floor below, by the winding of the massive stairs. Against the dull wainscot walls were pendent cases stored with grotesque, unfamiliar mummies, seen imperfectly by the moon that shot through the window-panes, and the candle in the old woman's hand. And as now she turned towards me, nodding her signal to follow, and went on up the shadowy passage, rows of gigantic birds—ibis and vulture, and huge sea-glaucus—glared at me in the false light of their hungry eyes.

So I entered the sick-room, and the first glance told me that my art was powerless there.

The children of the stricken widower were grouped round his bed, the eldest apparently about fifteen, the youngest four; one little girl—the only female child—was clinging to her father's neck, her face pressed to his bosom, and in that room her sobs alone were loud.

As I passed the threshold, Dr. Lloyd lifted his face, which had been bent over the weeping child, and gazed on me with an aspect of strange glee, which I failed to interpret. Then, as I stole towards him softly and slowly, he pressed his lips on the long fair tresses that streamed wild over his breast, motioned to a nurse who stood beside his pillow to take the child away, and, in a voice clearer than I could have expected in one on whose brow lay the unmistakable hand of death, he bade the nurse and the children to quit the room. All went sorrowfully, but silently, save the little girl, who, borne off in the nurse's arms, continued to sob as if her heart were breaking.

I was not prepared for a scene so affecting; it moved me to the quick. My eyes wistfully followed the children so soon to be orphans, as one after one went out into the dark, chill shadow, and amidst the bloodless forms of the dumb brute nature, ranged in grisly vista beyond the death-room of man. And when the last infant shape had vanished, and the door closed with a jarring click, my sight wandered loiteringly round the chamber before I could bring myself to fix it on the broken form, beside which I now stood in all that glorious vigor of frame which had fostered the pride of my mind.

In the moment consumed by my mournful survey, the whole aspect of the place impressed itself effaceably on lifelong remembrance. Through the high, deep-sunken casement, across which the thin, faded curtain was but half drawn, the moonlight rushed, and then settled on the floor in one shroud of white glimmer, lost under the gloom of the death-bed. The roof was low, and seemed lower still by heavy intersecting beams, which I might have touched with my lifted hand. And the tall guttering candle by the bedside, and the flicker from the fire struggling out through the fuel but newly heaped on it, threw their reflection on the ceiling just over my head in a reek of quivering blackness, like an angry cloud.

Suddenly I felt my arm grasped: with his left hand (the right side was already lifeless) the dying man drew me towards him nearer and nearer, till his lips almost touched my ear.

And, in a voice now firm, now splitting into gasp and hiss, thus he said:

"I have summoned you to gaze on your own work! You have stricken down my life at the moment when it was most needed by my children, and most serviceable to mankind. Had I lived a few years longer, my children would have entered on manhood, safe from the temptations of want and undejected by the charity of strangers. Thanks to you, they will be penniless orphans. Fellow-creatures afflicted by maladies your pharmacopœia has failed to reach came to me for relief, and they found it. 'The effect of imagination,' you say. What matters, if I directed the imagination to cure? Now you have mocked the unhappy ones out of their last chance of life. They will suffer and perish. Did you believe me in error? Still you knew that my object was research into truth. You employed against your brother in art venomous drugs and a poisoned probe. Look at me! Are you satisfied with your work?"

I sought to draw back and pluck my arm from the dying man's grasp. I could not do so without using a force that would have been inhuman. His lips drew nearer still to my ear.

"Vain pretender, do not boast that you brought a genius for epigram to the service of science. Science is lenient to all who offer experiment as the test of conjecture. You are of the stuff of which inquisitors are made. You cry that truth is profaned when your dogmas are questioned. In your shallow presumption you have meted the dominions of nature, and where your eye halts its vision, you say, 'There, nature must close': in the bigotry which adds crime to presumption, you would stone the discoverer who, in annexing new realms to her chart, unsettles your arbitrary landmarks. Verily, retribution shall await you. In those spaces which your sight has disdained to explore, you shall yourself be a lost and bewildered straggler. Hist! I see them already! The gibbering phantoms are gathering round you!"

The man's voice stopped abruptly; his eye fixed in a glazing stare; his hand relaxed its hold; he fell back on the pillow. I stole from the room; on the landing-place I met the nurse and the old woman-servant. Happily the children were not there. But I heard the wail of the female child from some room not far distant.

I whispered hurriedly to the nurse, "All is over!"—passed again under the jaws of the vast anaconda—and, on through

the blind lane between the dead walls—on through the ghastly streets, under the ghastly moon, went back to my solitary home.

CHAPTER III.

It was some time before I could shake off the impression made on me by the words and the look of that dying man.

It was not that my conscience upbraided me. What had I done? Denounced that which I held, in common with most men of sense in or out of my profession, to be one of those illusions by which quackery draws profit from the wonder of ignorance. Was I to blame if I refused to treat with the grave respect due to asserted discovery in legitimate science pretensions to powers akin to the fables of wizards? Was I to descend from the Academe of decorous science to examine whether a slumbering sibyl could read from a book placed at her back, or tell me at L—— what at that moment was being done by my friend at the Antipodes?

And what though Dr. Lloyd himself might be a worthy and honest man, and a sincere believer in the extravagances for which he demanded an equal credulity in others, do not honest men every day incur the penalty of ridicule if, from a defect of good sense, they make themselves ridiculous? Could I have foreseen that a satire so justly provoked would inflict so deadly a wound? Was I inhumanly barbarous because the antagonist destroyed was morbidly sensitive? My conscience, therefore, made me no reproach, and the public was as little severe as my conscience. The public had been with me in our contest; the public knew nothing of my opponent's deathbed accusations; the public knew only that I had attended him in his last moments; it saw me walk beside the bier that bore him to his grave; it admired the respect to his memory which I evinced in the simple tomb that I placed over his remains, inscribed with an epitaph that did justice to his unquestionable benevolence and integrity; above all, it praised the energy with which I set on foot a subscription for his orphan children, and the generosity with which I headed that subscription by a sum that was large in proportion to my means.

To that sum I did not, indeed, limit my contribution. The sobs of the poor female child rang still on my heart. As her grief had been keener than that of her brothers, so she might be subjected to sharper trials than they, when the time came for her to fight her own way through the world; therefore I

secured to her, but with such precautions that the gift could not be traced to my hand, a sum to accumulate till she was of marriageable age, and which then might suffice for a small wedding portion; or if she remained single, for an income that would place her beyond the temptation of want, or the bitterness of a servile dependence.

That Dr. Lloyd should have died in poverty was a matter of surprise at first, for his profits during the last few years had been considerable, and his mode of life far from extravagant. But just before the date of our controversy he had been induced to assist the brother of his lost wife, who was a junior partner in a London bank, with the loan of his accumulated savings. This man proved dishonest; he embezzled that and other sums intrusted to him, and fled the country. The same sentiment of conjugal affection which had cost Dr. Lloyd his fortune kept him silent as to the cause of the loss. It was reserved for his executors to discover the treachery of the brother-in-law whom he, poor man, would have generously screened from additional disgrace.

The Mayor of L——, a wealthy and public-spirited merchant, purchased the museum which Dr. Lloyd's passion for natural history had induced him to form; and the sum thus obtained, together with that raised by subscription, sufficed, not only to discharge all debts due by the deceased, but to insure to the orphans the benefits of an education that might fit at least the boys to enter fairly armed into that game, more of skill than of chance, in which Fortune is really so little blinded that we see, in each turn of her wheel, wealth and its honors pass away from the lax fingers of ignorance and sloth, to the resolute grasp of labor and knowledge.

Meanwhile, a relation in a distant county undertook the charge of the orphans; they disappeared from the scene, and the tides of life in a commercial community soon flowed over the place which the dead man had occupied in the thoughts of his bustling townsfolk.

One person at L——, and only one, appeared to share and inherit the rancor with which the poor physician had denounced me on his deathbed. It was a gentleman named Vigors, distantly related to the deceased, and who had been, in point of station, the most eminent of Dr. Lloyd's partisans in the controversy with myself; a man of no great scholastic acquirements, but of respectable abilities. He had that kind of power which the world concedes to respectable abilities, when accompanied with a temper more than usually stern, and

a moral character more than usually austere. His ruling passion was to sit in judgment upon others; and, being a magistrate, he was the most active and the most rigid of all the magistrates L—— had ever known.

Mr. Vigors at first spoke of me with great bitterness, as having ruined, and in fact killed, his friend, by the uncharitable and unfair acerbity which he declared I had brought into what ought to have been an unprejudiced examination of simple matter of fact. But finding no sympathy in these charges, he had the discretion to cease from making them, contenting himself with a solemn shake of his head if he heard my name mentioned in terms of praise, and an oracular sentence or two, such as "Time will show"; "All's well that ends well," etc. Mr. Vigors, however, mixed very little in the more convivial intercourse of the townspeople. He called himself domestic; but, in truth, he was ungenial. A stiff man, starched with self-esteem. He thought that his dignity of station was not sufficiently acknowledged by the merchants of Low Town, and his superiority of intellect not sufficiently recognized by the exclusives of the Hill. His visits were, therefore, chiefly confined to the houses of neighboring squires, to whom his reputation as a magistrate, conjoined with his solemn exterior, made him one of those oracles by which men consent to be awed on condition that the awe is not often inflicted. And though he opened his house three times a week, it was only to a select few, whom he first fed and then biologized. Electro-biology was very naturally the special entertainment of a man whom no intercourse ever pleased in which his will was not imposed upon others. Therefore he only invited to his table persons whom he could stare into the abnegation of their senses, willing to say that beef was lamb, or brandy was coffee, according as he willed them to say. And, no doubt, the persons asked would have said anything he willed, so long as they had, in substance, as well as in idea, the beef and the brandy, the lamb and the coffee. I did not, then, often meet Mr. Vigors at the houses in which I occasionally spent my evenings. I heard of his enmity as a man safe in his home hears the sough of a wind on a common without. If now and then we chanced to pass in the streets, he looked up at me (he was a small man walking on tiptoe) with the sullen scowl of dislike. And, from the height of my stature, I dropped upon the small man and sullen scowl the affable smile of supreme indifference.

CHAPTER IV.

I HAD now arrived at that age when an ambitious man, satisfied with his progress in the world without, begins to feel, in the cravings of unsatisfied affection, the void of a solitary hearth. I resolved to marry, and looked out for a wife. I had never hitherto admitted into my life the passion of love. In fact, I had regarded that passion, even in my earlier youth, with a certain superb contempt, as a malady engendered by an effeminate idleness, and fostered by a sickly imagination.

I wished to find in a wife a rational companion, an affectionate and trustworthy friend. No views of matrimony could be less romantic, more soberly sensible, than those which I conceived. Nor were my requirements mercenary or presumptuous. I cared not for fortune; I asked nothing from connections. My ambition was exclusively professional; it could be served by no titled kindred, accelerated by no wealthy dower. I was no slave to beauty. I did not seek in a wife the accomplishments of a finishing school-teacher.

Having decided that the time had come to select my helpmate, I imagined that I should find no difficulty in a choice that my reason would approve. But day upon day, week upon week, passed away, and though among the families I visited there were many young ladies who possessed more than the qualifications with which I conceived that I should be amply contented, and by whom I might flatter myself that my proposals would not be disdained, I saw not one to whose lifelong companionship I should not infinitely have preferred the solitude I found so irksome.

One evening, in returning home from visiting a poor female patient whom I attended gratuitously, and whose case demanded more thought than that of any other in my list—for though it had been considered hopeless in the hospital, and she had come home to die, I felt certain that I could save her, and she seemed recovering under my care—one evening, it was the fifteenth of May, I found myself just before the gates of the house that had been inhabited by Dr. Lloyd. Since his death the house had been unoccupied; the rent asked for it by the proprietor was considered high; and from the sacred Hill on which it was situated, shyness or pride banished the wealthier traders. The garden gates stood wide open, as they had stood in the winter night on which I had passed through them to the chamber of death. The remembrance of that deathbed came

vividly before me, and the dying man's fantastic threat rang again in my startled ears. An irresistible impulse, which I could not then account for, and which I cannot account for now—an impulse the reverse of that which usually makes us turn away with quickened step from a spot that recalls associations of pain—urged me on through the open gates up the neglected grass-grown road, urged me to look, under the western sun of the joyous spring, at that house which I had never seen but in the gloom of a winter night, under the melancholy moon. As the building came in sight, with dark-red bricks, partially overgrown with ivy, I perceived that it was no longer unoccupied. I saw forms passing athwart the open windows; a van laden with articles of furniture stood before the door; a servant in livery was beside it giving directions to the men who were unloading. Evidently some family was just entering into possession. I felt somewhat ashamed of my trespass, and turned round quickly to retrace my steps. I had retreated but a few yards, when I saw before me, at the entrance gates, Mr. Vigors, walking beside a lady apparently of middle age; while, just at hand, a path cut through the shrubs gave view of a small wicket-gate at the end of the grounds. I felt unwilling not only to meet the lady, whom I guessed to be the new occupier, and to whom I should have to make a somewhat awkward apology for intrusion, but still more to encounter the scornful look of Mr. Vigors, in what appeared to my pride a false or undignified position. Involuntarily, therefore, I turned down the path which would favor my escape unobserved. When about half way between the house and the wicket-gate, the shrubs that had clothed the path on either side suddenly opened to the left, bringing into view a circle of sward, surrounded by irregular fragments of old brickwork partially covered with ferns, creepers, or rock-plants, weeds, or wild flowers; and, in the centre of the circle, a fountain, or rather well, over which was built a Gothic monastic dome, or canopy, resting on small Norman columns, time-worn, dilapidated. A large willow overhung this unmistakable relic of the ancient abbey. There was an air of antiquity, romance, legend about this spot, so abruptly disclosed amidst the delicate green of the young shrubberies. But it was not the ruined wall nor the Gothic well that chained my footstep and charmed my eye.

It was a solitary human form, seated amidst the mournful ruins.

The form was so slight, the face so young, that at the first glance I murmured to myself, "What a lovely child!" But as my eye lingered it recognized in the upturned, thoughtful brow

in the sweet, serious aspect, in the rounded outlines of that slender shape, the inexpressible dignity of virgin woman.

A book was on her lap, at her feet a little basket, half filled with violets and blossoms culled from the rock-plants that nestled amidst the ruins. Behind her, the willow, like an emerald waterfall, showered down its arching abundant green, bough after bough, from the tree-top to the sward, descending in wavy verdure, bright towards the summit in the smile of the setting sun, and darkening into shadow as it neared the earth.

She did not notice, she did not see me; her eyes were fixed upon the horizon where it sloped farthest into space, above the tree-tops and the ruins; fixed so intently that mechanically I turned my own gaze to follow the flight of hers. It was as if she watched for some expected, familiar sign to grow out from the depths of heaven: perhaps to greet, before other eyes beheld it, the ray of the earliest star.

The birds dropped from the boughs on the turf around her, so fearlessly that one alighted amidst the flowers in the little basket at her feet. There is a famous German poem, which I had read in my youth, called the Maiden from Abroad, variously supposed to be an allegory of Spring, or of Poetry, according to the choice of commentators: it seemed to me as if the poem had been made for her. Verily, indeed, in her, poet or painter might have seen an image equally true to either of those adorners of the earth; both outwardly a delight to sense, yet both wakening up thoughts within us, not sad, but akin to sadness.

I heard now a step behind me, and a voice which I recognized to be that of Mr. Vigors. I broke from the charm by which I had been so lingeringly spellbound, hurried on confusedly, gained the wicket-gate, from which a short flight of stairs descended into the common thoroughfare. And there the every-day life lay again before me. On the opposite side, houses, shops, church-spires; a few steps more, and the bustling streets! How immeasurably far from, yet how familiarly near to, the world in which we move and have being is that fairy land of romance which opens out from the hard earth before us, when Love steals at first to our side; fading back into the hard earth again as Love smiles or sighs its farewell!

CHAPTER V.

And before that evening I had looked on Mr. Vigors with supreme indifference! What importance he now assumed in

my eyes! The lady with whom I had seen him was doubtless the new tenant of that house in which the young creature by whom my heart was so strangely moved evidently had her home. Most probably the relation between the two ladies was that of mother and daughter. Mr. Vigors, the friend of one, might himself be related to both; might prejudice them against me; might—here, starting up, I snapped the thread of conjecture, for right before my eyes, on the table beside which I had seated myself on entering my room, lay a card of invitation:

MRS. POYNTZ.
At Home,
Wednesday, May 15th.
Early.

Mrs. Poyntz—Mrs. Colonel Poyntz? The Queen of the Hill. There, at her house, I could not fail to learn all about the newcomers, who could never without her sanction have settled on her domain.

I hastily changed my dress, and, with beating heart, wound my way up the venerable eminence.

I did not pass through the lane which led direct to Abbots' House (for that old building stood solitary amidst its grounds, a little apart from the spacious platform on which the society of the Hill was concentrated), but up the broad causeway, with vistaed gas-lamps; the gayer shops still unclosed, the tide of busy life only slowly ebbing from the still animated street, on to a square, in which the four main thoroughfares of the city converged, and which formed the boundary of Low Town. A huge dark archway, popularly called Monk's Gate, at the angle of this square, made the entrance to Abbey Hill. When the arch was passed, one felt at once that one was in the town of a former day. The pavement was narrow, and rugged; the shops small, their upper stories projecting, with, here and there, plastered fronts, quaintly arabesqued. An ascent, short, but steep and tortuous, conducted at once to the old Abbey Church, nobly situated in a vast quadrangle, round which were the genteel and gloomy dwellings of the Areopagites of the Hill. More genteel and less gloomy than the rest—lights at the windows and flowers on the balcony—stood forth, flanked by a garden wall at either side, the mansion of Mrs. Colonel Poyntz.

As I entered the drawing-room, I heard the voice of the hostess; it was a voice clear, decided, metallic, bell-like, uttering these words: "Taken Abbots' House? I will tell you."

CHAPTER VI.

Mrs. Poyntz was seated on the sofa; at her right side sat fat Mrs. Bruce, who was a Scotch lord's granddaughter; at her left thin Miss Brabazon, who was an Irish baronet's niece. Around her—a few seated, many standing—had grouped all the guests, save two old gentlemen, who remained aloof with Colonel Poyntz near the whist-table, waiting for the fourth old gentleman, who was to make up the rubber, but who was at that moment spellbound in the magic circle which curiosity, that strongest of social demons, had attracted round the hostess.

"Taken Abbots' House? I will tell you. Ah, Dr. Fenwick, charmed to see you. You know Abbots' House is let at last? Well, Miss Brabazon, dear, you ask who has taken it. I will inform you—a particular friend of mine."

"Indeed! Dear me!" said Miss Brabazon, looking confused. "I hope I did not say anything to—"

"Wound my feelings. Not in the least. You said your uncle, Sir Phelim, employed a coachmaker named Ashleigh; that Ashleigh was an uncommon name, though Ashley was a common one; you intimated an appalling suspicion that the Mrs. Ashleigh who had come to the Hill was the coachmaker's widow. I relieve your mind—she is not; she is the widow of Gilbert Ashleigh, of Kirby Hall."

"Gilbert Ashleigh," said one of the guests, a bachelor, whose parents had reared him for the Church, but who, like poor Goldsmith, did not think himself good enough for it—a mistake of over-modesty, for he matured into a very harmless creature. "Gilbert Ashleigh. I was at Oxford with him—a gentleman commoner of Christ Church. Good-looking man—very: *sapped*—"

"Sapped! What's that? Oh, studied. That he did all his life. He married young—Anne Chaloner; she and I were girls together; married the same year. They settled at Kirby Hall—nice place, but dull. Poyntz and I spent a Christmas there. Ashleigh, when he talked was charming, but he talked very little. Anne, when she talked, was commonplace, and she talked very much. Naturally, poor thing, she was so happy. Poyntz and I did not spend another Christmas there. Friendship is long, but life is short. Gilbert Ashleigh's life was short indeed; he died in the seventh year of his marriage, leaving only one child, a girl. Since then, though I never spent another Christmas at Kirby Hall, I have frequently spent a day there, doing my best

to cheer up Anne. She was no longer talkative, poor dear. Wrapt up in her child, who has now grown into a beautiful girl of eighteen—such eyes, her father's—the real dark blue—rare; sweet creature, but delicate; not, I hope, consumptive, but delicate; quiet—wants life. My girl Jane adores her. Jane has life enough for two."

"Is Miss Ashleigh the heiress to Kirby Hall?" asked Mrs. Bruce, who had an unmarried son.

"No. Kirby Hall passed to Ashleigh Sumner, the male heir, a cousin. And the luckiest of cousins! Gilbert's sister, showy woman (indeed all show), had contrived to marry her kinsman, Sir Walter Ashleigh Haughton, the head of the Ashleigh family—just the man made to be the reflector of a showy woman! He died years ago, leaving an only son, Sir James, who was killed last winter, by a fall from his horse. And here, again, Ashleigh Sumner proved to be the male heir-at-law. During the minority of this fortunate youth Mrs. Ashleigh had rented Kirby Hall of his guardian. He is now just coming of age, and that is why she leaves. Lilian Ashleigh will have, however, a very good fortune; is what we genteel paupers call an heiress. Is there anything more you want to know?"

Said thin Miss Brabazon, who took advantage of her thinness to wedge herself into every one's affairs: "A most interesting account. What a nice place Abbots' House could be made with a little taste! So aristocratic! Just what I should like if I could afford it! The drawing-room should be done up in the Moorish style, with geranium-colored silk curtains, like dear Lady L——'s boudoir at Twickenham. And Mrs Ashleigh has taken the house! On lease too, I suppose!" Here Miss Brabazon fluttered her fan angrily, and then exclaimed: "But what on earth brings Mrs. Ashleigh here?"

Answered Mrs. Colonel Poyntz, with the military frankness by which she kept her company in good humor, as well as awe:

"Why do any of us come here? Can any one tell me?"

There was a blank silence, which the hostess herself was the first to break.

"None of us present can say why we came here. I can tell you why Mrs. Ashleigh came. Our neighbor, Mr. Vigors, is a distant connection of the late Gilbert Ashleigh, one of the executors to his will, and the guardian to the heir-at-law. About ten days ago Mr. Vigors called on me, for the first time since I felt it my duty to express my disapprobation of the strange vagaries so unhappily conceived by our poor dear friend Dr. Lloyd. And when he had taken his chair, just where

you now sit, Dr. Fenwick, he said, in a sepulchral voice, stretching out two fingers, so—as if I were one of the what-do-you-call-'ems who go to sleep when he bids them: 'Marm, you know Mrs. Ashleigh? You correspond with her.' 'Yes, Mr. Vigors; is there any crime in that? You look as if there were.' 'No crime, marm,' said the man, quite seriously. 'Mrs. Ashleigh is a lady of amiable temper, and you are a woman of masculine understanding.' "

Here there was a general titter. Mrs. Colonel Poyntz hushed it with a look of severe surprise. "What is there to laugh at? All women would be men if they could. If my understanding is masculine, so much the better for me. I thanked Mr. Vigors for his very handsome compliment, and he then went on to say, 'that though Mrs. Ashleigh would now have to leave Kirby Hall in a very few weeks, she seemed quite unable to make up her mind where to go; that it had occurred to him that, as Miss Ashleigh was of an age to see a little of the world, she ought not to remain buried in the country; while, being of quiet mind, she recoiled from the dissipation of London. Between the seclusion of the one and the turmoil of the other, the society of L—— was a happy medium. He should be glad of my opinion. He had put off asking for it, because he owned his belief that I had behaved unkindly to his lamented friend, Dr. Lloyd: but he now found himself in rather an awkward position. His ward, young Sumner, had prudently resolved on fixing his country residence at Kirby Hall, rather than at Haughton Park, the much larger seat, which had so suddenly passed to his inheritance, and which he could not occupy without a vast establishment, that to a single man, so young, would be but a cumbersome and costly trouble. Mr. Vigors was pledged to his ward to obtain him possession of Kirby Hall, the precise day agreed upon, but Mrs. Ashleigh did not seem disposed to stir; could not decide where else to go. Mr. Vigors was loth to press hard on his old friend's widow and child. It was a thousand pities Mrs. Ashleigh could not make up her mind; she had had ample time for preparation. A word from me at this moment would be an effective kindness. Abbots' House was vacant, with a garden so extensive that the ladies would not miss the country. Another party was after it, but—' 'Say no more,' I cried; 'no party but my dear old friend Anne Ashleigh shall have Abbots' House. So that question is settled.' I dismissed Mr. Vigors, sent for my carriage—that is, for Mr. Barker's yellow fly and his best horses—and drove that very day to Kirby Hall, which,

though not in this county, is only twenty-five miles distant. I slept there that night. By nine o'clock the next morning I had secured Mrs. Ashleigh's consent, on the promise to save her all trouble; came back, sent for the landlord, settled the rent, lease, agreement; engaged Forbes's vans to remove the furniture from Kirby Hall; told Forbes to begin with the beds. When her own bed came, which was last night, Anne Ashleigh came too. I have seen her this morning. She likes the place; so does Lilian. I asked them to meet you all here to-night; but Mrs Ashleigh was tired. The last of the furniture was to arrive to-day; and though dear Mrs. Ashleigh is an undecided character, she is not inactive. But it is not only the planning where to put tables and chairs that would have tired her to-day; she has had Mr. Vigors on her hands all the afternoon, and he has been—here's her little note—what are the words? No doubt, 'most overpowering and oppressive'—no, 'most kind and attentive'—different words, but, as applied to Mr. Vigors, they mean the same thing.

"And now, next Monday—we must leave them in peace till then—you will call on the Ashleighs. The Hill knows what is due to itself; it cannot delegate to Mr. Vigors, a respectable man indeed, but who does not belong to its set, its own proper course of action towards those who would shelter themselves on its bosom. The Hill cannot be kind and attentive, overpowering or oppressive, by proxy. To those new-born into its family circle it cannot be an indifferent godmother; it has towards them all the feelings of a mother—or of a stepmother, as the case may be. Where it says, 'This can be no child of mine,' it is a stepmother indeed; but, in all those whom I have presented to its arms, it has hitherto, I am proud to say, recognized desirable acquaintances, and to them the Hill has been a mother. And now, my dear Mr. Sloman, go to your rubber; Poyntz is impatient, though he don't show it. Miss Brabazon, love, we all long to see you seated at the piano—you play so divinely! Something gay, if you please; something gay, but not very noisy—Mr. Leopold Smythe will turn the leaves for you. Mrs. Bruce, your own favorite set at vingt-un, with four new recruits. Dr. Fenwick, you are like me, don't play cards, and don't care for music: sit here, and talk or not, as you please, while I knit."

The other guests thus disposed of, some at the card-tables, some round the piano, I placed myself at Mrs. Poyntz's side, on a seat niched in the recess of a window which an evening unusually warm for the month of May permitted to be left

open. I was next to one who had known Lilian as a child, one from whom I had learned by what sweet name to call the image which my thoughts had already shrined. How much that I still longed to know she could tell me! But in what form of question could I lead to the subject yet not betray my absorbing interest in it? Longing to speak, I felt as if stricken dumb; stealing an unquiet glance towards the face beside me, and deeply impressed with that truth which the Hill had long ago reverently acknowledged, viz., that Mrs. Colonel Poyntz was a very superior woman, a very powerful creature.

And there she sat knitting, rapidly, firmly; a woman somewhat on the other side of forty, complexion a bronzed paleness, hair a bronzed brown, in strong ringlets cropped short behind—handsome hair for a man; lips that, when closed, showed inflexible decision, when speaking became supple and flexible with an easy humor and a vigilant finesse; eyes of a red hazel, quick but steady; observant, piercing, dauntless eyes; altogether a fine countenance: would have been a very fine countenance in a man; profile sharp, straight, clear-cut, with an expression, when in repose, like that of a sphinx; a frame robust, not corpulent, of middle height, but with an air and carriage that made her appear tall; peculiarly white firm hands, indicative of vigorous health, not a vein visible on the surface.

There she sat knitting, knitting, and I by her side, gazing now on herself, now on her work, with a vague idea that the threads in the skein of my own web of love or of life were passing quick through those noiseless fingers. And, indeed, in every web of romance, the fondest, one of the Parcæ is sure to be some matter-of-fact She, Social Destiny, as little akin to romance herself—as was this worldly Queen of the Hill.

CHAPTER VII.

I HAVE given a sketch of the outward woman of Mrs. Colonel Poyntz. The inner woman was a recondite mystery, deep as that of the sphinx, whose features her own resembled. But between the outward and the inward woman there is ever a third woman—the conventional woman—such as the whole human being appears to the world, always mantled, sometimes masked.

I am told that the fine people of London do not recognize the title of "Mrs. Colonel." If that be true, the fine people of

London must be clearly in the wrong, for no people in the universe could be finer than the fine people of Abbey Hill; and they considered their sovereign had as good a right to the title of Mrs. Colonel as the Queen of England has to that of "our Gracious Lady." But Mrs. Poyntz, herself, never assumed the title of Mrs. Colonel; it never appeared on her cards any more than the title of "Gracious Lady" appears on the cards which convey the invitation that a Lord Steward or Lord Chamberlain is commanded by her Majesty to issue. To titles, indeed, Mrs. Poyntz evinced no superstitious reverence. Two peeresses, related to her, not distantly, were in the habit of paying her a yearly visit, which lasted two or three days. The Hill considered these visits an honor to its eminence. Mrs. Poyntz never seemed to esteem them an honor to herself; never boasted of them; never sought to show off her grand relations, nor put herself the least out of the way to receive them. Her mode of life was free from ostentation. She had the advantage of being a few hundreds a year richer than any other inhabitant of the Hill; but she did not devote her superior resources to the invidious exhibition of superior splendor. Like a wise sovereign the revenues of her exchequer were applied to the benefit of her subjects, and not to the vanity of egotistical parade. As no one else on the Hill kept a carriage, she declined to keep one. Her entertainments were simple, but numerous. Twice a week she received the Hill, and was genuinely at home to it. She contrived to make her parties proverbially agreeable. The refreshments were of the same kind as those which the poorest of her old maids of honor might proffer; but they were better of their kind, the best of their kind—the best tea, the best lemonade, the best cakes. Her rooms had an air of comfort, which was peculiar to them. They looked like rooms accustomed to receive, and receive in a friendly way; well warmed, well lighted, card-tables and piano each in the place that made cards and music inviting. On the walls a few old family portraits, and three or four other pictures said to be valuable and certainly pleasing—two Watteaus, a Canaletti, a Weenix—plenty of easy-chairs and settees covered with a cheerful chintz. In the arrangement of the furniture generally, an indescribable careless elegance. She herself was studiously plain in dress, more conspicuously free from jewellery and trinkets than any married lady on the Hill. But I have heard from those who were authorities on such a subject, that she was never seen in a dress of the last year's fashion. She adopted the mode as it came out, just enough to show that she was

aware it was out; but with a sober reserve, as much as to say: "I adopt the fashion as far as it suits myself; I do not permit the fashion to adopt me." In short, Mrs. Colonel Poyntz was sometimes rough, sometimes coarse, always masculine, and yet somehow or other masculine in a womanly way; but she was never vulgar because never affected. It was impossible not to allow that she was a thorough gentlewoman, and she could do things that lower other gentlewomen, without any loss of dignity. Thus she was an admirable mimic, certainly in itself the least ladylike condescension of humor. But when she mimicked, it was with so tranquil a gravity, or so royal a good humor, that one could only say: "What talents for society dear Mrs. Colonel has!" As she was a gentlewoman emphatically, so the other colonel, the he-colonel, was emphatically a gentleman; rather shy, but not cold; hating trouble of every kind, pleased to seem a cipher in his own house. If the sole study of Mrs. Colonel had been to make her husband comfortable, she could not have succeeded better than by bringing friends about him and then taking them off his hands. Colonel Poyntz, the he-colonel, had seen, in his youth, actual service; but had retired from his profession many years ago, shortly after his marriage. He was a younger brother of one of the principal squires in the county; inherited the house he lived in, with some other valuable property in and about L——, from an uncle; was considered a good landlord; and popular in Low Town, though he never interfered in its affairs. He was punctiliously neat in his dress; a thin, youthful figure, crowned with a thick, youthful wig. He never seemed to read anything but the newspapers and the *Meteorological Journal:* was supposed to be the most weather-wise man in all L——. He had another intellectual predilection—whist. But in that he had less reputation for wisdom. Perhaps it requires a rarer combination of mental faculties to win an odd trick than to divine a fall in the glass. For the rest, the he-colonel, many years older than his wife, despite the thin, youthful figure, was an admirable aide-de-camp to the general in command, Mrs. Colonel; and she could not have found one more obedient, more devoted, nor more proud of a distinguished chief.

In giving to Mrs. Colonel Poyntz the appellation of Queen of the Hill, let there be no mistake. She was not a constitutional sovereign; her monarchy was absolute. All her proclamations had the force of laws.

Such ascendancy could not have been attained without considerable talents for acquiring and keeping it. Amidst all her

offhand, brisk, imperious frankness, she had the ineffable discrimination of tact. Whether civil or rude, she was never civil or rude but what she carried public opinion along with her. Her knowledge of general society must have been limited, as must be that of all female sovereigns. But she seemed gifted with an intuitive knowledge of human nature, which she applied to her special ambition of ruling it. I have not a doubt that if she had been suddenly transferred, a perfect stranger, to the world of London, she would have soon forced her way to its selectest circles, and, when once there, held her own against a duchess.

I have said that she was not affected: this might be one cause of her sway over a set in which nearly every other woman was trying rather to seem, than to be, a somebody.

But if Mrs. Colonel Poyntz was not artificial, she was artful, or perhaps I might more justly say—artistic. In all she said and did there were conduct, system, plan. She could be a most serviceable friend, most damaging enemy; yet I believe she seldom indulged in strong likings or strong hatreds. All was policy—a policy akin to that of a grand party chief, determined to raise up those whom, for any reason of state, it was prudent to favor, and to put down those whom, for any reason of state, it was expedient to humble or to crush.

Ever since the controversy with Dr. Lloyd, this lady had honored me with her benignest countenance. And nothing could be more adroit than the manner in which, while imposing me on others as an oracular authority, she sought to subject to her will the oracle itself.

She was in the habit of addressing me in a sort of motherly way, as if she had the deepest interest in my welfare, happiness, and reputation. And thus, in every compliment, in every seeming mark of respect, she maintained the superior dignity of one who takes from responsible station the duty to encourage rising merit: so that, somehow or other, despite all that pride which made me believe that I needed no helping hand to advance or to clear my way through the world, I could not shake off from my mind the impression that I was mysteriously patronized by Mrs. Colonel Poyntz.

We might have sat together five minutes, side by side, in silence as complete as if in the cave of Trophonius, when, without looking up from her work, Mrs. Poyntz said abruptly:

"I am thinking about you, Dr. Fenwick. And you—are thinking about some other woman. Ungrateful man!"

"Unjust accusation! My very silence should prove how

intently my thoughts were fixed on you, and on the weird web which springs under your hand in meshes that bewilder the gaze and snare the attention."

Mrs. Poyntz looked up at me for a moment—one rapid glance of the bright red hazel eye—and said:

"Was I really in your thoughts? Answer truly."

"Truly, I answer, you were."

"That is strange! Who can it be?"

"Who can it be? What do you mean?"

"If you were thinking of me, it was in connection with some other person—some other person of my own sex. It is certainly not poor dear Miss Brabazon. Who else can it be?"

Again the red eye shot over me, and I felt my cheek redden beneath it.

"Hush!" she said, lowering her voice; "You are in love!"

"In love!—I! Permit me to ask you why you think so?"

"The signs are unmistakable; you are altered in your manner, even in the expression of your face, since I last saw you; your manner is generally quiet and observant, it is now restless and distracted; your expression of face is generally proud and serene, it is now humbled and troubled. You have something on your mind! It is not anxiety for your reputation, that is established; nor for your fortune, that is made; it is not anxiety for a patient, or you would scarcely be here. But anxiety it is, an anxiety that is remote from your profession, that touches your heart and is new to it!"

I was startled, almost awed. But I tried to cover my confusion with a forced laugh.

"Profound observer! Subtle analyst! You have convinced me that I must be in love, though I did not suspect it before. But when I strive to conjecture the object, I am as much perplexed as yourself; and with you, I ask, who can it be?"

"Whoever it be," said Mrs. Poyntz, who had paused, while I spoke, from her knitting, and now resumed it very slowly and very carefully, as if her mind and her knitting worked in unison together; "Whoever it be, love in you would be serious; and, with or without love, marriage is a serious thing to us all. It is not every pretty girl that would suit Allen Fenwick."

"Alas! Is there any pretty girl whom Allen Fenwick would suit?"

"Tut! You should be above the fretful vanity that lays traps for a compliment. Yes; the time has come in your life and your career when you would do well to marry. I give my consent to that," she added with a smile as if in jest, and a

slight nod as if in earnest. The knitting here went on more decidedly, more quickly. "But I do not yet see the person. No! 'Tis a pity, Allen Fenwick (whenever Mrs. Poyntz called me by my Christian name, she always assumed her majestic motherly manner)—a pity that, with your birth, energies, perseverance, talents, and, let me add, your advantages of manner and person—a pity that you did not choose a career that might achieve higher fortunes and louder fame than the most brilliant success can give to a provincial physician. But in that very choice you interest me. My choice has been much the same. A small circle, but the first in it. Yet, had I been a man, or had my dear colonel been a man whom it was in the power of a woman's art to raise one step higher in that metaphorical ladder which is not the ladder of the angels, why then—what then? No matter! I am contented. I transfer my ambition to Jane. Do you not think her handsome?"

"There can be no doubt of that," said I, carelessly and naturally.

"I have settled Jane's lot in my own mind," resumed Mrs. Poyntz, striking firm into another row of knitting. "She will marry a country gentleman of large estate. He will go into Parliament. She will study his advancement as I study Poyntz's comfort. If he be clever, she will help to make him a minister; if he be not clever, his wealth will make her a personage, and lift him into a personage's husband. And, now that you see I have no matrimonial designs on you, Allen Fenwick, think if it will be worth while to confide in me. Possibly I may be useful—"

"I know not how to thank you. But, as yet, I have nothing to confide."

While thus saying, I turned my eyes towards the open window beside which I sat. It was a beautiful soft night. The May moon in all her splendor. The town stretched, far and wide, below with all its numberless lights; below—but somewhat distant; an intervening space was covered, here, by the broad quadrangle (in the midst of which stood, massive and lonely, the grand old church), and, there, by the gardens and scattered cottages or mansions that clothed the sides of the hill.

"Is not that house," I said, after a short pause, "yonder, with the three gables, the one in which—in which poor Dr. Lloyd lived—Abbots' House?"

I spoke abruptly, as if to intimate my desire to change the subject of conversation. My hostess stopped her knitting, half-rose, looked forth.

"Yes. But what a lovely night! How is it that the moon blends into harmony things of which the sun only marks the contrast? That stately old church tower, gray with its thousand years: those vulgar tile-roofs and chimney-pots raw in the freshness of yesterday: now, under the moonlight, all melt into one indivisible charm!"

As my hostess thus spoke, she had left her seat, taking her work with her, and passed from the window into the balcony. It was not often that Mrs. Poyntz condescended to admit what is called "sentiment" into the range of her sharp, practical, worldly talk, but she did so at times; always, when she did, giving me the notion of an intellect much too comprehensive not to allow that sentiment has a place in this life, but keeping it in its proper place, by that mixture of affability and indifference with which some high-born beauty allows the genius, but checks the presumption, of a charming and penniless poet. For a few minutes her eyes roved over the scene in evident enjoyment; then, as they slowly settled upon the three gables of Abbots' House, her face regained that something of hardness which belonged to its decided character; her fingers again mechanically resumed her knitting, and she said, in her clear, unsoftened metallic chime of voice: "Can you guess why I took so much trouble to oblige Mr. Vigors and locate Mrs. Ashleigh yonder?"

"You favored us with a full explanation of your reasons."

"Some of my reasons; not the main one. People who undertake the task of governing others, as I do, be their rule a kingdom or a hamlet, must adopt a principle of government and adhere to it. The principle that suits best with the Hill is respect for the Proprieties. We have not much money; *entre nous*, we have no great rank. Our policy is, then, to set up the Proprieties as an influence which money must court and rank is afraid of. I had learned just before Mr. Vigors called on me that Lady Sarah Bellasis entertained the idea of hiring Abbots' House. London has set its face against her; a provincial town would be more charitable. An earl's daughter, with a good income and an awfully bad name, of the best manners and of the worst morals, would have made sad havoc among the Proprieties. How many of our primmest old maids would have deserted tea and Mrs. Poyntz for champagne and her ladyship? The Hill was never in so imminent a danger. Rather than Lady Sarah Bellasis should have had that house, I would have taken it myself, and stocked it with owls.

"Mrs. Ashleigh turned up just in the critical moment. Lady

Sarah is foiled, the Proprieties safe, and so that question is settled."

"And it will be pleasant to have your early friend so near you."

Mrs Poyntz lifted her eyes full upon me.

"Do you know Mrs. Ashleigh?"

"Not in the least."

"She has many virtues and few ideas. She is commonplace weak, as I am commonplace strong. But commonplace weak can be very lovable. Her husband, a man of genius and learning, gave her his whole heart—a heart worth having, but he was not ambitious, and he despised the world."

"I think you said your daughter was very much attached to Miss Ashleigh? Does her character resemble her mother's?"

I was afraid while I spoke that I should again meet Mrs. Poyntz's searching gaze, but she did not this time look up from her work.

"No; Lilian is anything but commonplace."

"You described her as having delicate health; you implied a hope that she was not consumptive. I trust that there is no serious reason for apprehending a constitutional tendency which at her age would require the most careful watching!"

"I trust not. If she were to die—Dr. Fenwick, what is the matter?"

So terrible had been the picture which this woman's words had brought before me, that I started as if my own life had received a shock.

"I beg pardon," I said falteringly, pressing my hand to my heart; "a sudden spasm here—it is over now. You were saying that—that—"

"I was about to say," and here Mrs. Poyntz laid her hand lightly on mine,—"I was about to say, that if Lilian Ashleigh were to die, I should mourn for her less than I might for one who valued the things of the earth more. But I believe there is no cause for the alarm my words so inconsiderately excited in you. Her mother is watchful and devoted; and if the least thing ailed Lilian, she would call in medical advice. Mr. Vigors would, I know, recommend Dr. Jones."

Closing our conference with those stinging words, Mrs. Poyntz here turned back into the drawing-room.

I remained some minutes on the balcony, disconcerted, enraged. With what consummate art had this practised diplomatist wound herself into my secret! That she had read my heart better than myself was evident from that Parthian shaft,

barbed with Dr. Jones, which she had shot over her shoulder in retreat. That from the first moment in which she had decoyed me to her side, she had detected "the something" on my mind, was perhaps but the ordinary quickness of female penetration. But it was with no ordinary craft that her whole conversation afterwards had been so shaped as to learn the something, and lead me to reveal the some one to whom the something was linked. For what purpose? What was it to her? What motive could she have beyond the mere gratification of curiosity? Perhaps, at first, she thought I had been caught by her daughter's showy beauty, and hence the half-friendly, half-cynical frankness with which she had avowed her ambitious projects for that young lady's matrimonial advancement. Satisfied by my manner that I cherished no presumptuous hopes in that quarter, her scrutiny was doubtless continued from that pleasure in the exercise of a wily intellect which impels schemers and politicians to an activity for which, without that pleasure itself, there would seem no adequate inducement; and besides, the ruling passion of this petty sovereign was power. And if knowledge be power, there is no better instrument of power over a contumacious subject than that hold on his heart which is gained in the knowledge of its secret.

But "secret"! Had it really come to this? Was it possible that the mere sight of a human face, never beheld before, could disturb the whole tenor of my life—a stranger of whose mind and character I knew nothing, whose very voice I had never heard? It was only by the intolerable pang of anguish that had rent my heart in the words, carelessly, abruptly spoken, "if she were to die," that I had felt how the world would be changed to me, if indeed that face were seen in it no more! Yes, secret it was no longer to myself—I loved! And like all on whom love descends, sometimes softly, slowly, with the gradual wing of the cushat settling down into its nest, sometimes with the swoop of the eagle on his unsuspecting quarry, I believed that none ever before loved as I loved; that such love was an abnormal wonder, made solely for me, and I for it. Then my mind insensibly hushed its angrier and more turbulent thoughts, as my gaze rested upon the roof-tops of Lilian's home, and the shimmering silver of the moonlit willow, under which I had seen her gazing into the roseate heavens.

CHAPTER VIII.

When I returned to the drawing-room, the party was evidently about to break up. Those who had grouped round the piano were now assembled round the refreshment-table. The card-players had risen, and were settling or discussing gains and losses. While I was searching for my hat, which I had somewhere mislaid, a poor gentleman, tormented by tic-douloreux, crept timidly up to me—the proudest and the poorest of all the hidalgos settled on the Hill. He could not afford a fee for a physician's advice, but pain had humbled his pride, and I saw at a glance that he was considering how to take a surreptitious advantage of social intercourse, and obtain the advice without paying the fee. The old man discovered the hat before I did, stooped, took it up, extended it to me with the profound bow of the old school, while the other hand, clenched and quivering, was pressed into the hollow of his cheek, and his eyes met mine with wistful mute entreaty. The instinct of my profession seized me at once. I could never behold suffering, without forgetting all else in the desire to relieve it.

"You are in pain," said I softly. "Sit down and describe the symptoms. Here, it is true, I am no professional doctor, but I am a friend who is fond of doctoring, and knows something about it."

So we sat down a little apart from the other guests, and after a few questions and answers, I was pleased to find that his "tic" did not belong to the less curable kind of that agonizing neuralgia. I was especially successful in my treatment of similar sufferings, for which I had discovered an anodyne that was almost specific. I wrote on a leaf of my pocket-book a prescription which I felt sure would be efficacious, and as I tore it out and placed it in his hand, I chanced to look up, and saw the hazel eyes of my hostess fixed upon me with a kinder and softer expression than they often condescended to admit into their cold and penetrating lustre. At that moment, however, her attention was drawn from me to a servant, who entered with a note, and I heard him say, though in an undertone, "From Mrs. Ashleigh."

She opened the note, read it hastily, ordered the servant to wait without the door, retired to her writing-table, which stood near the place at which I still lingered, rested her face on her hand, and seemed musing. Her meditation was very soon over. She turned her head, and, to my surprise, beckoned to me. I approached.

"Sit here," she whispered; "turn your back towards those people, who are no doubt watching us. Read this."

She placed in my hand the note she had just received. It contained but a few words to this effect:

"DEAR MARGARET: I am so distressed. Since I wrote to you, a few hours ago, Lilian is taken suddenly ill, and I fear seriously. What medical man should I send for? Let my servant have his name and address. A. A."

I sprang from my seat.

"Stay," said Mrs. Poyntz. "Would you much care if I sent the servant to Dr. Jones?"

"Ah, madam, you are cruel! What have I done that you should become my enemy?"

"Enemy! No. You have just befriended one of my friends. In this world of fools intellect should ally itself with intellect. No; I am not your enemy! But you have not yet asked me to be your friend."

Here she put into my hands a note she had written while thus speaking. "Receive your credentials. If there be any cause for alarm, or if I can be of use, send for me." Resuming the work she had suspended, but with lingering, uncertain fingers, she added: "So far, then, this is settled. Nay, no thanks; it is but little that is settled as yet."

CHAPTER IX.

IN a very few minutes I was once more in the grounds of that old gable house; the servant, who went before me, entered them by the stairs and the wicket-gate of the private entrance; that way was the shortest. So again I passed by the circling glade and the monastic well—sward, trees, and ruins, all suffused in the limpid moonlight.

And now I was in the house; the servant took upstairs the note with which I was charged, and a minute or two afterwards returned and conducted me to the corridor above, in which Mrs Ashleigh received me. I was the first to speak. "Your daughter—is—is—not seriously ill, I hope. What is it?"

"Hush!" she said, under her breath. "Will you step this way for a moment?" She passed through a doorway to the right. I followed her, and as she placed on the table the light she had been holding, I looked round with a chill at the heart—it was the room in which Dr. Lloyd had died. Impossible to

mistake. The furniture, indeed, was changed—there was no bed in the chamber; but the shape of the room, the position of the high casement, which was now open wide, and through which the moonlight streamed more softly than on that drear winter night, the great square beams intersecting the low ceiling—all were impressed vividly on my memory. The chair to which Mrs. Ashleigh beckoned me was placed just on the spot were I had stood by the bed-head of the dying man.

I shrank back; I could not have seated myself there. So I remained leaning against the chimney-piece, while Mrs. Ashleigh told her story.

She said that on their arrival the day before, Lilian had been in more than usually good health and spirits, delighted with the old house, the grounds, and especially the nook by the Monk's Well, at which Mrs. Ashleigh had left her that evening in order to make some purchases in the town, in company with Mr. Vigors. When Mrs. Ashleigh returned, she and Mr. Vigors had sought Lilian in that nook, and Mrs. Ashleigh then detected, with a mother's eye, some change in Lilian, which alarmed her. She seemed listless and dejected, and was very pale; but she denied that she felt unwell. On regaining the house she had sat down in the room in which we then were—"Which," said Mrs. Ashleigh, "as it is not required for a sleeping-room, my daughter, who is fond of reading, wished to fit up as her own morning-room, or study. I left her here and went into the drawing-room below with Mr. Vigors. When he quitted me, which he did very soon, I remained for nearly an hour giving directions about the placing of furniture, which had just arrived from our late residence. I then went upstairs to join my daughter, and to my terror found her apparently lifeless in her chair. She had fainted away."

I interrupted Mrs. Ashleigh here. "Has Miss Ashleigh been subject to fainting fits?"

"No, never. When she recovered she seemed bewildered—disinclined to speak. I got her to bed, and as she then fell quietly to sleep, my mind was relieved. I thought it only a passing effect of excitement, in a change of abode; or caused by something like malaria in the atmosphere of that part of the grounds in which I had found her seated."

"Very likely. The hour of sunset at this time of year is trying to delicate constitutions. Go on."

"About three-quarters of an hour ago she woke up with a loud cry, and has been ever since in a state of great agitation, weeping violently, and answering none of my questions. Yet

she does not seem light-headed, but rather what we call hysterical."

"You will permit me now to see her. Take comfort—in all you tell me I see nothing to warrant serious alarm"

CHAPTER X.

To the true physician there is an inexpressible sanctity in the sick-chamber. At its threshold the more human passions quit their hold on his heart. Love there would be profanation. Even the grief permitted to others he must put aside. He must enter that room—a calm intelligence. He is disabled for his mission if he suffer aught to obscure the keen, quiet glance of his science. Age or youth, beauty or deformity, innocence or guilt, merge their distinctions in one common attribute—human suffering appealing to human skill.

Woe to the households in which the trusted Healer feels not on his conscience the solemn obligations of his glorious art. Reverently, as in a temple, I stood in the virgin's chamber. When her mother placed her hand in mine, and I felt the throb of its pulse, I was aware of no quicker beat of my own heart. I looked with a steady eye on the face, more beautiful from the flush that deepened the delicate hues of the young cheek, and the lustre that brightened the dark blue of the wandering eyes. She did not at first heed me; did not seem aware of my presence; but kept murmuring to herself words which I could not distinguish.

At length, when I spoke to her, in that low, soothing tone which we learn at the sick-bed, the expression of her face altered suddenly; she passed the hand I did not hold over her forehead, turned round, looked at me full and long, with unmistakable surprise, yet not as if the surprise displeased her; less the surprise which recoils from the sight of a stranger than that which seems doubtfully to recognize an unexpected friend. Yet on the surprise there seemed to creep something of apprehension—of fear; her hand trembled, her voice quivered, as she said:

"Can it be? Can it be? Am I awake? Mother, who is this?"

"Only a kind visitor, Dr. Fenwick, sent by Mrs. Poyntz, for I was uneasy about you, darling. How are you now?"

"Better. Strangely better."

She removed her hand gently from mine, and with an in-

voluntary modest shrinking, turned towards Mrs. Ashleigh, drawing her mother towards herself, so that she became at once hidden from me.

Satisfied that there was here no delirium, nor even more than the slight and temporary feeling which often accompanies a sudden nervous attack in constitutions peculiarly sensitive, I retired noiselessly from the room, and went, not into that which had been occupied by the ill-fated naturalist, but downstairs into the drawing-room, to write my prescription. I had already sent the servant off with it to the chemist's before Mrs. Ashleigh joined me.

"She seems recovering surprisingly; her forehead is cooler; she is perfectly self-possessed, only she cannot account for her own seizure; cannot account either for the fainting or the agitation with which she awoke from sleep."

"I think I can account for both. The first room in which she entered—that in which she fainted—had its window open; the sides of the window are overgrown with rank creeping plants in full blossom. Miss Ashleigh had already predisposed herself to injurious effects from the effluvia, by fatigue, excitement, imprudence in sitting out at the fall of a heavy dew. The sleep after the fainting fit was the more disturbed, because Nature, always alert and active in subjects so young, was making its own effort to right itself from an injury. Nature has nearly succeeded. What I have prescribed will a little aid and accelerate that which Nature has yet to do, and in a day or two I do not doubt that your daughter will be perfectly restored. Only let me recommend care to avoid exposure to the open air during the close of the day. Let her avoid also the room in which she was first seized, for it is a strange phenomenon in nervous temperaments that a nervous attack may, without visible cause, be repeated in the same place where it was first experienced. You had better shut up the chamber for at least some weeks, burn fires in it, repaint and paper it, sprinkle chloroform. You are not, perhaps, aware that Dr. Lloyd died in that room after a prolonged illness. Suffer me to wait till your servant returns with the medicine, and let me employ the interval in asking you a few questions. Miss Ashleigh, you say, never had a fainting fit before. I should presume that she is not what we call strong. But has she ever had any illness that alarmed you?"

"Never."

"No great liability to cold and cough, to attacks of the chest or lungs?"

"Certainly not. Still I have feared that she may have a tendency to consumption. Did you think so? Your questions alarm me!"

"I do not think so; but before I pronounce a positive opinion, one question more. You say you have feared a tendency to consumption. Is that disease in her family? She certainly did not inherit it from you. But on her father's side?"

"Her father," said Mrs. Ashleigh, with tears in her eyes, "died young, but of brain fever, which the medical men said was brought on by overstudy."

"Enough, my dear madam. What you say confirms my belief that your daughter's constitution is the very opposite to that in which the seeds of consumption lurk. It is rather that far nobler constitution, which the keenness of the nervous susceptibility renders delicate but elastic—as quick to recover as it is to suffer."

"Thank you, thank you, Dr. Fenwick, for what you say. You take a load from my heart. For Mr. Vigors, I know, thinks Lilian consumptive, and Mrs. Poyntz has rather frightened me at times by hints to the same effect. But when you speak of nervous susceptibility, I do not quite understand you. My daughter is not what is commonly called nervous. Her temper is singularly even."

"But if not excitable, should you also say that she is not impressionable? The things which do not disturb her temper may, perhaps, deject her spirits. Do I make myself understood?"

"Yes, I think I understand your distinction. But I am not quite sure if it applies. To most things that affect the spirits she is not more sensitive than other girls, perhaps less so. But she is certainly very impressionable in some things."

"In what?"

"She is more moved than any one I ever knew by objects in external nature, rural scenery, rural sounds, by music, by the books that she reads—even books that are not works of imagination. Perhaps in all this she takes after her poor father, but in a more marked degree—at least, I observe it more in her. For he was very silent and reserved. And perhaps also her peculiarities have been fostered by the seclusion in which she has been brought up. It was with a view to make her a little more like girls of her own age that our friend, Mrs. Poyntz, induced me to come here. Lilian was reconciled to this change; but she shrank from the thoughts of London, which I should have preferred. Her poor father could not endure London."

"Miss Ashleigh is fond of reading?"

"Yes, she is fond of reading, but more fond of musing. She will sit by herself for hours without book or work, and seem as abstracted as if in a dream. She was so even in her earliest childhood. Then she would tell me what she had been conjuring up to herself. She would say that she had seen—positively seen—beautiful lands far away from earth; flowers and trees not like ours. As she grew older this visionary talk displeased me and I scolded her, and said that if others heard her, they would think that she was not only silly but very untruthful. So of late years she never ventures to tell me what, in such dreamy moments, she suffers herself to imagine; but the habit of musing continues still. Do you not agree with Mrs. Poyntz, that the best cure would be a little cheerful society amongst other young people?"

"Certainly," said I honestly, though with a jealous pang. "But here comes the medicine. Will you take it up to her, and then sit with her half an hour or so? By that time I expect she will be asleep. I will wait here till you return. Oh, I can amuse myself with the newspapers and books on your table. Stay! One caution: be sure there are no flowers in Miss Ashleigh's sleeping-room. I think I saw a treacherous rose-tree in a stand by the window. If so, banish it."

Left alone, I examined the room in which, O thought of joy! I had surely now won the claim to become a privileged guest. I touched the books Lilian must have touched; in the articles of furniture, as yet so hastily disposed that the settled look of home was not about them, I still knew that I was gazing on things which her mind must associate with the history of her young life. That lute-harp must be surely hers, and the scarf, with a girl's favorite colors—pure white and pale blue—and the bird-cage, and the childish ivory work-case, with implements too pretty for use, all spoke of her.

It was a blissful, intoxicating revery, which Mrs. Ashleigh's entrance disturbed.

Lilian was sleeping calmly. I had no excuse to linger there any longer.

"I leave you, I trust, with your mind quite at ease," said I. "You will allow me to call to-morrow, in the afternoon?"

"Oh yes, gratefully."

Mrs. Ashleigh held out her hand as I made towards the door.

Is there a physician who has not felt at times how that ceremonious fee throws him back from the garden-land of humanity into the market-place of money—seems to put him out of the

pale of equal friendship, and say, "True, you have given health and life. Adieu! there, you are paid for it." With a poor person there would have been no dilemma, but Mrs. Ashleigh was affluent: to depart from custom here was almost impertinence. But had the penalty of my refusal been the doom of never again beholding Lilian, I could not have taken her mother's gold. So I did not appear to notice the hand held out to me, and passed by with a quickened step.

"But, Dr. Fenwick, stop!"

"No, ma'am, no! Miss Ashleigh would have recovered as soon without me. Whenever my aid is really wanted, then—but Heaven grant that time may never come! We will talk again about her to-morrow."

I was gone. Now in the garden ground, odorous with blossoms; now in the lane, enclosed by the narrow walls; now in the deserted streets, over which the moon shone full as in that winter night when I hurried from the chamber of death. But the streets were not ghastly now, and the moon was no longer Hecate, that dreary goddess of awe and spectres, but the sweet, simple Lady of the Stars, on whose gentle face lovers have gazed ever since (if that guess of astronomers be true) she was parted from earth to rule the tides of its deeps from afar, even as love, from love divided, rules the heart, that yearns towards it, with mysterious law!

CHAPTER XI.

With what increased benignity I listened to the patients who visited me the next morning. The whole human race seemed to be worthier of love, and I longed to diffuse amongst all some rays of the glorious hope that had dawned upon my heart. My first call, when I went forth, was on the poor young woman from whom I had been returning the day before, when an impulse, which seemed like a fate, had lured me into the grounds where I had first seen Lilian. I felt grateful to this poor patient; without her Lilian herself might be yet unknown to me.

The girl's brother, a young man employed in the police, and whose pay supported a widowed mother and the suffering sister, received me at the threshold of the cottage.

"Oh, sir! she is so much better to-day; almost free from pain. Will she live now? Can she live?"

"If my treatment has really done the good you say; if she be really better under it, I think her recovery may be pronounced. But I must first see her."

The girl was indeed wonderfully better. I felt that my skill was achieving a signal triumph; but that day even my intellectual pride was forgotten in the luxurious unfolding of that sense of heart which had so newly waked into blossom.

As I recrossed the threshold, I smiled on the brother, who was still lingering there:

"Your sister is saved, Waby. She needs now chiefly wine, and good though light nourishment; these you will find at my house; call there for them every day."

"God bless you, sir! If ever I can serve you—" His tongue faltered—he could say no more.

Serve me—Allen Fenwick—that poor policeman! Me, whom a king could not serve! What did I ask from earth but Fame and Lilian's heart? Thrones and bread man wins from the aid of others. Fame and woman's heart he can only gain through himself.

So I strode gayly up the hill, through the iron gates, into the fairy ground, and stood before Lilian's home.

The man-servant, on opening the door, seemed somewhat confused, and said hastily, before I spoke:

"Not at home, sir; a note for you."

I turned the note mechanically in my hand; I felt stunned.

"Not at home! Miss Ashleigh cannot be out. How is she?"

"Better, sir, thank you."

I still could not open the note; my eyes turned wistfully towards the windows of the house, and there—at the drawing-room window—I encountered the scowl of Mr. Vigors. I colored with resentment, divined that I was dismissed, and walked away with a proud crest and a firm step.

When I was out of the gates, in the blind lane, I opened the note. It began formally—"Mrs Ashleigh presents her compliments," and went on to thank me, civilly enough, for my attendance the night before, would not give me the trouble to repeat my visit, and enclosed a fee, double the amount of the fee prescribed by custom. I flung the money, as an asp that had stung me, over the high wall, and tore the note into shreds. Having thus idly vented my rage, a dull, gnawing sorrow came heavily down upon all other emotions, stifling and replacing them. At the mouth of the lane I halted. I shrank from the thought of the crowded streets beyond. I shrank yet more from the routine of duties, which stretched before me in the desert into which daily life was so suddenly smitten. I sat down by the roadside, shading my dejected face with a nerveless

hand. I looked up as the sound of steps reached my ear, and saw Dr. Jones coming briskly along the lane, evidently from Abbots' House. He must have been there at the very time I had called. I was not only dismissed but supplanted. I rose before he reached the spot on which I had seated myself, and went my way into the town, went through my allotted round of professional visits; but my attentions were not so tenderly devoted, my skill so genially quickened by the glow of benevolence, as my poorer patients had found them in the morning. I have said how the physician should enter the sick-room. "A Calm Intelligence!" But if you strike a blow on the heart, the intellect suffers. Little worth, I suspect, was my "calm intelligence" that day. Bichat, in his famous book upon Life and Death, divides life into two classes, animal and organic. Man's intellect, with the brain for its centre, belongs to life animal; his passions to life organic, centred in the heart, in the viscera. Alas! if the noblest passions through which alone we lift ourselves into the moral realm of the sublime and beautiful really have their centre in the life which the very vegetable, that lives organically, shares with us! And, alas! if it be that life which we share with the vegetable, that can cloud, obstruct, suspend, annul that life centred in the brain, which we share with every being howsoever angelic, in every star howsoever remote, on whom the Creator bestows the faculty of thought!

CHAPTER XII.

But suddenly I remembered Mrs. Poyntz. I ought to call on her. So I closed my round of visits at her door. The day was then far advanced, and the servant politely informed me that Mrs. Poyntz was at dinner. I could only leave my card, with a message that I would pay my respects to her the next day. That evening I received from her this note:

"Dear Dr. Fenwick:

"I regret much that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow. Poyntz and I are going to visit his brother, at the other end of the county and we start early. We shall be away some days. Sorry to hear from Mrs. Ashleigh that she has been persuaded by Mr. Vigors to consult Dr. Jones about Lilian. Vigors and Jones both frighten the poor mother and insist upon consumptive tendencies. Unluckily, you seem to have said there was little the matter. Some doctors gain their practice,

as some preachers fill their churches, by adroit use of the appeals to terror. You do not want patients, Dr. Jones does. And, after all, better perhaps as it is.—Yours, etc.

"M. POYNTZ."

To my more selfish grief anxiety for Lilian was now added. I had seen many more patients die from being mistreated for consumption than from consumption itself. And Dr. Jones was a mercenary, cunning, needy man with much crafty knowledge of human foibles, but very little skill in the treatment of human maladies. My fears were soon confirmed. A few days after I heard from Miss Brabazon that Miss Ashleigh was seriously ill, kept her room. Mrs. Ashleigh made this excuse for not immediately returning the visits which the Hill had showered upon her. Miss Brabazon had seen Dr. Jones, who had shaken his head, said it was a serious case; but that time and care (his time and his care!) might effect wonders.

How stealthily at the dead of the night I would climb the Hill, and look towards the windows of the old sombre house—one window, in which a light burnt dim and mournful, the light of a sick-room—of hers!

At length Mrs. Poyntz came back, and I entered her house, having fully resolved beforehand on the line of policy to be adopted towards the potentate whom I hoped to secure as an ally. It was clear that neither disguise nor half-confidence would baffle the penetration of so keen an intellect, nor propitiate the good-will of so imperious and resolute a temper. Perfect frankness here was the wisest prudence; and, after all, it was most agreeable to my own nature, and most worthy of my own honor.

Luckily, I found Mrs. Poyntz alone, and taking in both mine the hand she somewhat coldly extended to me, I said, with the earnestness of suppressed emotion:

"You observed when I last saw you, that I had not yet asked you to be my friend. I ask it now. Listen to me with all the indulgence you can vouchsafe, and let me at least profit by your counsel if you refuse to give me your aid."

Rapidly, briefly, I went on to say how I had first seen Lilian, and how sudden, how strange to myself, had been the impression which that first sight of her had produced.

"You remarked the change that had come over me," said I; "you divined the cause before I divined it myself; divined it as I sat there beside you, thinking that through you I might see, in the freedom of social intercourse, the face that was then

haunting me. You know what has since passed. Miss Ashleigh is ill; her case is, I am convinced, wholly misunderstood. All other feelings are merged in one sense of anxiety, of alarm. But it has become due to me, due to all, to incur the risk of your ridicule even more than of your reproof, by stating to you thus candidly, plainly, bluntly, the sentiment which renders alarm so poignant, and which, if scarcely admissible to the romance of some wild, dreamy boy, may seem an unpardonable folly in a man of my years and my sober calling; due to me, to you, to Mrs. Ashleigh; because still the dearest thing in life to me is honor. And if you who know Mrs. Ashleigh so intimately, who must be more or less aware of her plans or wishes for her daughter's future; if you believe that those plans or wishes lead to a lot far more ambitious than an alliance with me could offer to Miss Ashleigh, then aid Mr. Vigors in excluding me from the house; aid me in suppressing a presumptuous, visionary passion. I cannot enter that house without love and hope at my heart. And the threshold of that house I must not cross if such love and such hope would be a sin and a treachery in the eyes of its owner. I might restore Miss Ashleigh to health; her gratitude might—I cannot continue. This danger must not be to me nor to her, if her mother has views far above such a son-in-law. And I am the more bound to consider all this while it is yet time, because I heard you state that Miss Ashleigh had a fortune—was what would be here termed an heiress. And the full consciousness that whatever fame one in my profession may live to acquire, does not open those vistas of social power and grandeur which are opened by professions to my eyes less noble in themselves—that full consciousness, I say, was forced upon me by certain words of your own. For the rest, you know my descent is sufficiently recognized as that amidst well-born gentry to have rendered me no *mésalliance* to families the most proud of their ancestry, if I had kept my hereditary estate and avoided the career that makes me useful to man. But I acknowledge that on entering a profession such as mine—entering any profession except that of arms or the senate—all leave their pedigree at its door, an erased or dead letter. All must come as equals, high-born or low-born, into that arena in which men ask aid from a man as he makes himself; to them his dead forefathers are idle dust. Therefore, to the advantage of birth I cease to have a claim. I am but a provincial physician, whose station would be the same had he been a cobbler's son. But gold retains its grand privilege in all ranks. He who has gold is

removed from the suspicion that attaches to the greedy fortune-hunter. My private fortune, swelled by my savings, is sufficient to secure to any one I married a larger settlement than many a wealthy squire can make. I need no fortune with a wife; if she have one, it would be settled on herself. Pardon these vulgar details. Now, have I made myself understood?"

"Fully," answered the Queen of the Hill, who had listened to me quietly, watchfully, and without one interruption. "Fully. And you have done well to confide in me with so generous an unreserve. But before I say further, let me ask, what would be your advice for Lilian, supposing that you ought not to attend her? You have no trust in Dr. Jones; neither have I. And Anne Ashleigh's note received to-day, begging me to call, justifies your alarm. Still you think there is no tendency to consumption?"

"Of that I am certain so far as my slight glimpse of a case that to me, however, seems a simple and not uncommon one, will permit. But in the alternative you put—that my own skill, whatever its worth, is forbidden—my earnest advice is, that Mrs. Ashleigh should take her daughter at once to London, and consult there those great authorities to whom I cannot compare my own opinion or experience; and by their counsel abide."

Mrs. Poyntz shaded her eyes with her hand for a few moments, and seemed in deliberation with herself. Then she said, with her peculiar smile, half-grave, half-ironical:

"In matters more ordinary you would have won me to your side long ago. That Mr. Vigors should have presumed to cancel my recommendation to a settler on the Hill, was an act of rebellion, and involved the honor of my prerogative. But I suppressed my indignation at an affront so unusual, partly out of pique against yourself, but much more, I think, out of regard for you."

"I understand. You detected the secret of my heart; you knew that Mrs. Ashleigh would not wish to see her daughter the wife of a provincial physician."

"Am I sure, or are you sure, that the daughter herself would accept that fate; or if she accepted it, would not repent?"

"Do not think me the vainest of men when I say this—that I cannot believe I should be so enthralled by a feeling at war with my reason, unfavored by anything I can detect in my habits of mind, or even by the dreams of a youth which exalted science and excluded love, unless I was intimately con-

vinced that Miss Ashleigh's heart was free; that I could win, and that I could keep it! Ask me why I am convinced of this, and I can tell you no more why I think that she could love me, than I can tell you why I love her!"

"I am of the world, worldly. But I am a woman, womanly—though I may not care to be thought it. And, therefore, though what you say is, regarded in a worldly point of view, sheer nonsense, regarded in a womanly point of view it is logically sound. But still you cannot know Lilian as I do. Your nature and hers are in strong contrast. I do not think she is a safe wife for you. The purest, the most innocent creature imaginable, certainly that, but always in the seventh heaven. And you in the seventh heaven, just at this moment, but with an irresistible gravitation to the solid earth, which will have its way again when the honeymoon is over. I do not believe you two would harmonize by intercourse. I do not believe Lilian would sympathize with you, and I am sure you could not sympathize with her throughout the long, dull course of this workday life. And, therefore, for your sake as well as hers, I was not displeased to find that Dr. Jones had replaced you; and now, in return for your frankness, I say frankly, do not go again to that house. Conquer this sentiment, fancy, passion, whatever it be. And I will advise Mrs. Ashleigh to take Lilian to town. Shall it be so settled?"

I could not speak. I buried my face in my hands—misery, misery, desolation!

I know not how long I remained thus silent, perhaps many minutes. At length I felt a cold, firm, but not ungentle hand placed upon mine; and a clear, full, but not discouraging voice said to me:

"Leave me to think well over this conversation and to ponder well the value of all you have shown that you so deeply feel. The interests of life do not fill both scales of the balance. The heart which does not always go in the same scale with the interests, still has its weight in the scale opposed to them. I have heard a few wise men say, as many a silly woman says, 'Better be unhappy with one we love, than be happy with one we love not.' Do you say that, too?"

"With every thought of my brain, every beat of my pulse I say it."

"After that answer, all my questionings cease. You shall hear from me to-morrow. By that time, I shall have seen Anne and Lilian. I shall have weighed both scales of the balance, and the heart here, Allen Fenwick, seems very heavy.

Go, now. I hear feet on the stairs, Poyntz bringing up some friendly gossiper; gossipers are spies."

I passed my hand over my eyes, tearless, but how tears would have relieved the anguish that burdened them! and, without a word, went down the stairs, meeting at the landing-place Colonel Poyntz and the old man whose pain my prescription had cured. The old man was whistling a merry tune, perhaps first learned on the playground. He broke from it to thank, almost to embrace me, as I slid by him. I seized his jocund blessing as a good omen, and carried it with me as I passed into the broad sunlight. Solitary—solitary! Should I be so evermore?

CHAPTER XIII.

THE next day I had just dismissed the last of my visiting patients, and was about to enter my carriage and commence my round, when I received a twisted note containing but these words:

"Call on me to-day, as soon as you can.

"M. POYNTZ."

A few minutes afterwards I was in Mrs. Poyntz's drawing-room.

"Well, Allen Fenwick," said she, "I do not serve friends by halves. No thanks! I but adhere to a principle I have laid down for myself. I spent last evening with the Ashleighs. Lilian is certainly much altered—very weak, I fear very ill, and I believe very unskilfully treated by Dr. Jones. I felt that it was my duty to insist on a change of physician, but there was something else to consider before deciding who that physician should be. I was bound, as your confidante, to consult your own scruples of honor. Of course I could not say point-blank to Mrs. Ashleigh, 'Dr. Fenwick admires your daughter, would you object to him as a son-in-law?' Of course I could not touch at all on the secret with which you intrusted me; but I have not the less arrived at a conclusion, in agreement with my previous belief, that not being a woman of the world, Anne Ashleigh has none of the ambition which women of the world would conceive for a daughter who has a good fortune and considerable beauty; that her predominant anxiety is for her child's happiness, and her predominant fear is that her child will die. She would never oppose any attachment which Lilian might form; and if that attachment were for one who had

preserved her daughter's life, I believe her own heart would gratefully go with her daughter's. So far, then, as honor is concerned, all scruples vanish."

I sprang from my seat, radiant with joy. Mrs. Poyntz dryly continued: "You value yourself on your common-sense, and to that I address a few words of counsel which may not be welcome to your romance. I said that I did not think you and Lilian would suit each other in the long run; reflection confirms me in that supposition. Do not look at me so incredulously and so sadly. Listen, and take heed. Ask yourself what, as a man whose days are devoted to a laborious profession, whose ambition is entwined with its success, whose mind must be absorbed in its pursuits—ask yourself what kind of a wife you would have sought to win, had not this sudden fancy for a charming face rushed over your better reason, and obliterated all previous plans and resolutions. Surely some one with whom your heart would have been quite at rest; by whom your thoughts would have been undistracted from the channels into which your calling should concentrate their flow; in short, a serene companion in the quiet holiday of a trustful home! Is it not so?"

"You interpret my own thoughts when they have turned towards marriage. But what is there in Lilian Ashleigh that should mar the picture you have drawn?"

"What is there in Lilian Ashleigh which in the least accords with the picture? In the first place, the wife of a young physician should not be his perpetual patient. The more he loves her, and the more worthy she may be of love, the more her case will haunt him wherever he goes. When he returns home, it is not a holiday; the patient he most cares for, the anxiety that most gnaws him, awaits him there."

"But, good Heavens! why should Lilian Ashleigh be a perpetual patient? The sanitary resources of youth are incalculable. And—"

"Let me stop you; I cannot argue against a physician in love! I will give up that point in dispute, remaining convinced that there is something in Lilian's constitution which will perplex, torment, and baffle you. It was so with her father, whom she resembles in face and in character. He showed no symptoms of any grave malady. His outward form was, like Lilian's, a model of symmetry, except in this, that, like hers, it was too exquisitely delicate; but, when seemingly in the midst of perfect health, at any slight jar on the nerves he would become alarmingly ill. I was sure that he would die young, and he did so."

"Ay, but Mrs. Ashleigh said that his death was from brain-fever, brought on by over-study. Rarely, indeed, do women so fatigue the brain. No female patient, in the range of my practice, ever died of purely mental exertion."

"Of purely mental exertion, no; but of *heart* emotion, many female patients, perhaps? Oh, you own that! I know nothing about nerves. But I suppose that, whether they act on the brain or the heart, the result to life is much the same if the nerves be too finely strung for life's daily wear and tear. And this is what I mean, when I say you and Lilian will not suit. As yet, she is a mere child; her nature undeveloped, and her affections, therefore, untried. You might suppose that you had won her heart; she might believe that she gave it to you, and both be deceived. If fairies nowadays condescended to exchange their offspring with those of mortals, and if the popular tradition did not represent a fairy changeling as an ugly, peevish creature, with none of the grace of its parents, I should be half inclined to suspect that Lilian was one of the elfin people. She never seems at home on earth; and I do not think she will ever be contented with a prosaic earthly lot. Now I have told you why I do not think she will suit you. I must leave it to yourself to conjecture how far you would suit her. I say this in due season, while you may set a guard upon your impulse; while you may yet watch, and weigh, and meditate; and from this moment on that subject I say no more. I lend advice, but I never throw it away."

She came here to a dead pause, and began putting on her bonnet and scarf, which lay on the table beside her. I was a little chilled by her words, and yet more by the blunt, shrewd, hard look and manner which aided the effect of their delivery. But the chill melted away in the sudden glow of my heart when she again turned towards me and said:

"Of course you guess, from these preliminary cautions, that you are going into danger? Mrs. Ashleigh wishes to consult you about Lilian, and I propose to take you to her house."

"Oh, my friend, my dear friend, how can I ever repay you?" I caught her hand, the white, firm hand, and lifted it to my lips.

She drew it somewhat hastily away, and laying it gently on my shoulder, said, in a soft voice: "Poor Allen, how little the world knows either of us! But how little perhaps we know ourselves! Come, your carriage is here? That is right; we must put down Dr. Jones publicly and in all our state."

In the carriage Mrs. Poyntz told me the purport of that con-

versation with Mrs. Ashleigh to which I owed my re-introduction to Abbots' House. It seems that Mr. Vigors had called early the morning after my first visit; had evinced much discomposure on hearing that I had been summoned; dwelt much on my injurious treatment of Dr. Lloyd, whom, as distantly related to himself, and he (Mr. Vigors) being distantly connected with the late Gilbert Ashleigh, he endeavored to fasten upon his listener as one of her husband's family, whose quarrel she was bound in honor to take up. He spoke of me as an infidel "tainted with French doctrines," and as a practitioner rash and presumptuous; proving his own freedom from presumption and rashness by flatly deciding that my opinion must be wrong. Previously to Mrs. Ashleigh's migration to L——, Mr. Vigors had interested her in the pretended phenomena of mesmerism. He had consulted a clairvoyante, much esteemed by poor Dr. Lloyd, as to Lilian's health, and the clairvoyante had declared her to be constitutionally predisposed to consumption. Mr. Vigors persuaded Mrs. Ashleigh to come at once with him and see this clairvoyante herself, armed with a lock of Lilian's hair and a glove she had worn, as the media of mesmerical *rapport*.

The clairvoyante, one of those I had publicly denounced as an impostor, naturally enough denounced me in return. On being asked solemnly by Mr. Vigors "to look at Dr. Fenwick and see if his influence would be beneficial to the subject," the sibyl had become violently agitated, and said that, "when she looked at us together, we were enveloped in a black cloud; that this portended affliction and sinister consequences; that our *rapport* was antagonistic." Mr. Vigors then told her to dismiss my image, and conjure up that of Dr. Jones. Therewith the somnambule became more tranquil and said: "Dr. Jones would do well if he would be guided by higher lights than his own skill, and consult herself daily as to the proper remedies. The best remedy of all would be mesmerism. But since Dr. Lloyd's death, she did not know of a mesmerist, sufficiently gifted, in affinity with the patient." In fine, she impressed and awed Mrs. Ashleigh, who returned in haste, summoned Dr. Jones, and dismissed myself.

"I could not have conceived Mrs. Ashleigh to be so utterly wanting in common-sense," said I. "She talked rationally enough when I saw her."

"She has common-sense in general, and plenty of the sense most common," answered Mrs. Poyntz. "But she is easily led and easily frightened wherever her affections are concerned

and therefore, just as easily as she had been persuaded by Mr. Vigors and terrified by the somnambule, I persuaded her against the one, and terrified her against the other. I had positive experience on my side, since it was clear that Lilian had been getting rapidly worse under Dr. Jones's care. The main obstacles I had to encounter in inducing Mrs. Ashleigh to consult you again, were, first, her reluctance to disoblige Mr. Vigors, as a friend and connection of Lilian's father; and, secondly, her sentiment of shame in reinviting your opinion after having treated you with so little respect. Both these difficulties I took on myself. I bring you to her house, and, on leaving you, I shall go on to Mr. Vigors, and tell him what is done is my doing, and not to be undone by him; so that matter is settled. Indeed, if you were out of the question, I should not suffer Mr. Vigors to reintroduce all these mummeries of clairvoyance and mesmerism into the precincts of the Hill. I did not demolish a man I really liked in Dr. Lloyd, to set up a Dr. Jones, whom I despise, in his stead. Clairvoyance on Abbey Hill, indeed! I saw enough of it before."

"True; your strong intellect detected at once the absurdity of the whole pretence: the falsity of mesmerism, the impossibility of clairvoyance."

"No, my strong intellect did nothing of the kind. I do not know whether mesmerism be false or clairvoyance impossible; and I don't wish to know. All I do know is that I saw the Hill in great danger; young ladies allowing themselves to be put to sleep by gentlemen, and pretending they had no will of their own against such fascination! Improper and shocking! And Miss Brabazon beginning to prophesy, and Mrs. Leopold Smythe questioning her maid (whom Dr. Lloyd declared to be highly gifted) as to all the secrets of her friends. When I saw this, I said, 'The Hill is becoming demoralized; the Hill is making itself ridiculous; the Hill must be saved!' I remonstrated with Dr. Lloyd, as a friend; he remained obdurate. I annihilated him as an enemy, not to me but to the State. I slew my best lover for the good of Rome. Now you know why I took your part—not because I have any opinion, one way or the other, as to the truth or falsehood of what Dr. Lloyd asserted; but I have a strong opinion that, whether they be true or false, his notions were those which are not to be allowed on the Hill. And so, Allen Fenwick, that matter was settled."

Perhaps at another time I might have felt some little humiliation to learn that I had been honored with the influence of

this great potentate, not as a champion of truth, but as an instrument of policy; and I might have owned to some twinge of conscience in having assisted to sacrifice a fellow-seeker after science—misled, no doubt, but preferring his independent belief to his worldly interest—and sacrifice him to those deities with whom science is ever at war, the Prejudices of a Clique sanctified into the Proprieties of the World. But at that moment the words I heard made no perceptible impression on my mind. The gables of Abbots' House were visible above the evergreens and lilacs; another moment, and the carriage stopped at the door.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mrs. Ashleigh received us in the dining-room. Her manner to me, at first, was a little confused and shy. But my companion soon communicated something of her own happy ease to her gentler friend. After a short conversation we all three went to Lilian, who was in a little room on the ground-floor, fitted up as her study. I was glad to perceive that my interdict of the death-chamber had been respected.

She reclined on a sofa near the window, which was, however, jealously closed; the light of the bright May-day obscured by blinds and curtains; a large fire on the hearth; the air of the room that of a hot-house—the ignorant, senseless, exploded system of nursing into consumption those who are confined on suspicion of it! She did not heed us as we entered noiselessly; her eyes were drooped languidly on the floor, and with difficulty I suppressed the exclamation that rose to my lips on seeing her. She seemed within the last few days so changed, and on the aspect of the countenance there was so profound a melancholy! But as she slowly turned at the sound of our footsteps, and her eyes met mine, a quick blush came into the wan cheek, and she half-rose, but sank back as if the effort exhausted her. There was a struggle for breath, and a low hollow cough. Was it possible that I had been mistaken, and that in that cough was heard the warning knell of the most insidious enemy to youthful life?

I sat down by her side, I lured her on to talk of indifferent subjects—the weather, the gardens, the bird in the cage, which was placed on the table near her. Her voice, at first low and feeble, became gradually stronger, and her face lighted up with a child's innocent, playful smile. No, I had not been mistaken! There was no lymphatic, nerveless temperament, on

which consumption fastens as its lawful prey; here there was no hectic pulse, no hurried waste of the vital flame. Quietly and gently I made my observations, addressed my questions, applied my stethoscope; and when I turned my face towards her mother's anxious, eager eyes, that face told my opinion; for her mother sprang forward, clasped my hand, and said, through her struggling tears:

"You smile! You see nothing to fear?"

"Fear! No, indeed! You will soon be again yourself, Miss Ashleigh, will you not?"

"Yes," she said, with her sweet laugh, "I shall be well now very soon. But may I not have the window open? May I not go into the garden? I so long for fresh air."

"No, no, darling," exclaimed Mrs. Ashleigh, "not while the east winds last. Dr. Jones said on no account. On no account, Dr. Fenwick, eh?"

"Will you take my arm, Miss Ashleigh, for a few turns up and down the room?" said I. "We will then see how far we may rebel against Dr. Jones."

She rose with some little effort, but there was no cough. At first her step was languid; it became lighter and more elastic after a few moments.

"Let her come out," said I to Mrs. Ashleigh. "The wind is not in the east, and, while we are out, pray bid your servant lower to the last bar in the grate that fire—only fit for Christmas."

"But—"

"Ah, no buts! He is a poor doctor who is not a stern despot."

So the straw hat and mantle were sent for. Lilian was wrapped with unnecessary care, and we all went forth into the garden. Involuntarily we took the way to the Monk's Well, and at every step Lilian seemed to revive under the bracing air and temperate sun. We paused by the well.

"You do not feel fatigued, Miss Ashleigh?"

"No."

"But your face seems changed. It is grown sadder."

"Not sadder."

"Sadder than when I first saw it—saw it when you were seated here!" I said this in a whisper. I felt her hand tremble as it lay on my arm.

"You saw me seated here!"

"Yes. I will tell you how some day."

Lilian lifted her eyes to mine, and there was in them that

same surprise which I had noticed on my first visit—a surprise that perplexed me, blended with no displeasure, but yet with a something of vague alarm.

We soon returned to the house.

Mrs. Ashleigh made me a sign to follow her into the drawing-room, leaving Mrs. Poyntz with Lilian.

"Well?" said she tremblingly.

"Permit me to see Dr. Jones's prescriptions. Thank you. Ay, I thought so. My dear madam, the mistake here has been in depressing nature instead of strengthening; in narcotics instead of stimulants. The main stimulants which leave no reaction are air and light. Promise me that I may have my own way for a week; that all I recommend will be implicitly heeded?"

"I promise. But that cough; you noticed it?"

"Yes. The nervous system is terribly lowered, and nervous exhaustion is a strange impostor; it imitates all manner of complaints with which it has no connection. The cough will soon disappear! But pardon my question. Mrs. Poyntz tells me that you consulted a clairvoyante about your daughter. Does Miss Ashleigh know that you did so?"

"No; I did not tell her."

"I am glad of that. And pray, for Heaven's sake, guard her against all that may set her thinking on such subjects. Above all, guard her against concentring attention on any malady that your fears erroneously ascribe to her. It is amongst the phenomena of our organization that you cannot closely rivet your consciousness on any part of the frame, however healthy, but it will soon begin to exhibit morbid sensibility. Try to fix all your attention on your little finger for half an hour, and before the half-hour is over the little finger will be uneasy, probably even painful. How serious, then, is the danger to a young girl, at the age in which imagination is most active, most intense, if you force upon her a belief that she is in danger of a mortal disease; it is a peculiarity of youth to brood over the thought of early death much more resignedly, much more complacently, than we do in maturer years. Impress on a young imaginative girl, as free from pulmonary tendencies as you and I are, the conviction that she must fade away into the grave, and though she may not actually die of consumption, you instil slow poison into her system. Hope is the natural aliment of youth. You impoverish nourishment where you discourage hope. As soon as this temporary illness is over, reject for your daughter the melancholy care which seems

to her own mind to mark her out from others of her age. Rear her for the air—which is the kindest life-giver; to sleep with open windows; to be out at sunrise. Nature will do more for her than all our drugs can do. You have been hitherto fearing Nature; now trust to her."

Here Mrs. Poyntz joined us, and having, while I had been speaking, written my prescription and some general injunctions, I closed my advice with an appeal to that powerful protectress.

"This, my dear madam, is a case in which I need your aid, and I ask it. Miss Ashleigh should not be left with no other companion than her mother. A change of faces is often as salutary as a change of air. If you could devote an hour or two this very evening to sit with Miss Ashleigh, to talk to her with your usual cheerfulness, and—"

"Anne," interrupted Mrs. Poyntz, "I will come and drink tea with you at half-past seven, and bring my knitting; and perhaps, if you ask him, Dr. Fenwick will come too! He can be tolerably entertaining when he likes it."

"It is too great a tax on his kindness, I fear," said Mrs. Ashleigh. "But," she added cordially, "I should be grateful indeed if he would spare us an hour of his time."

I murmured an assent, which I endeavored to make not too joyous.

"So that matter is settled," said Mrs. Poyntz; "and now I shall go to Mr. Vigors and prevent his further interference."

"Oh! but, Margaret, pray don't offend him—a connection of my poor dear Gilbert's. And so tetchy! I am sure I do not know how you'll manage to—"

"To get rid of him? Never fear. As I manage everything and everybody," said Mrs. Poyntz bluntly. So she kissed her friend on the forehead, gave me a gracious nod, and, declining the offer of my carriage, walked with her usual brisk, decided tread down the short path towards the town.

Mrs. Ashleigh timidly approached me, and again the furtive hand bashfully insinuated the hateful fee.

"Stay," said I; "this is a case which needs the most constant watching. I wish to call so often that I should seem the most greedy of doctors if my visits were to be computed at guineas. Let me be at ease to effect my cure; my pride, of science is involved in it. And when amongst all the young ladies of the Hill you can point to none with a fresher bloom, or a fairer promise of healthful life, than the patient you intrust to my care, why, then the fee and the dismissal. Nay,

nay; I must refer you to our friend Mrs. Poyntz. It was so settled with her before she brought me here to displace Dr. Jones." Therewith I escaped.

CHAPTER XV.

In less than a week Lilian was convalescent; in less than a fortnight she regained her usual health; nay, Mrs. Ashleigh declared that she had never known her daughter appear so cheerful and look so well. I had established a familiar intimacy at Abbots' House; most of my evenings were spent there. As horse exercise formed an important part of my advice, Mrs. Ashleigh had purchased a pretty and quiet horse for her daughter; and, except the weather was very unfavorable, Lilian now rode daily with Colonel Poyntz, who was a notable equestrian, and often accompanied by Miss Jane Poyntz, and other young ladies of the Hill. I was generally relieved from my duties in time to join her as she returned homewards. Thus we made innocent appointments, openly, frankly, in her mother's presence, she telling me beforehand in what direction excursions had been planned with Colonel Poyntz, and I promising to fall in with the party, if my avocations would permit. At my suggestion, Mrs. Ashleigh now opened her house almost every evening to some of the neighboring families; Lilian was thus habituated to the intercourse of young persons of her own age. Music and dancing and childlike games made the old house gay. And the Hill gratefully acknowledged to Mrs. Poyntz, "that the Ashleighs were indeed a great acquisition."

But my happiness was not uncheckered. In thus unselfishly surrounding Lilian with others, I felt the anguish of that jealousy which is inseparable from those earlier stages of love, when the lover as yet has won no right to that self-confidence which can only spring from the assurance that he is loved.

In these social reunions I remained aloof from Lilian. I saw her courted by the gay young admirers whom her beauty and her fortune drew around her; her soft face brightening in the exercise of the dance, which the gravity of my profession rather than my years forbade me to join, and her laugh, so musically subdued, ravishing my ear and fretting my heart as if the laugh were a mockery on my sombre self and my presumptuous dreams. But no,—suddenly, shyly, her eyes would steal away from those about her, steal to the corner in which I

sat, as if they missed me, and, meeting my own gaze, their light softened before they turned away; and the color on her cheek would deepen, and to her lip there came a smile different from the smile that it shed on others. And then—and then—all jealousy, all sadness vanished, and I felt the glory which blends with the growing belief that we are loved.

In that diviner epoch of man's mysterious passion, when ideas of perfection and purity, vague and fugitive before, start forth and concentrate themselves round one virgin shape—that rises out from the sea of creation, welcomed by the Hours and adorned by the Graces—how the thought that this archetype of sweetness and beauty singles himself from the millions, singles himself from her choice, ennobles and lifts up his being! Though after-experience may rebuke the mortal's illusion, that mistook for a daughter of Heaven a creature of clay like himself, yet for a while the illusion has grandeur. Though it comes from the senses which shall later oppress and profane it, the senses at first shrink into shade, awed and hushed by the presence that charms them. All that is brightest and best in the man has soared up like long-dormant instincts of Heaven, to greet and to hallow what to him seems life's fairest dream of the heavenly! Take the wings from the image of Love, and the god disappears from the form!

Thus, if at moments jealous doubt made my torture, so the moment's relief from it sufficed for my rapture. But I had a cause for disquiet less acute but less varying than jealousy.

Despite Lilian's recovery from the special illness which had more immediately absorbed my care, I remained perplexed as to its cause and true nature. To her mother I gave it the convenient epithet of "nervous." But the epithet did not explain to myself all the symptoms I classified by it. There was still at times, when no cause was apparent or conjecturable, a sudden change in the expression of her countenance, in the beat of her pulse: the eye would become fixed, the bloom would vanish, the pulse would sink feebler and feebler till it could be scarcely felt; yet there was no indication of heart disease, of which such sudden lowering of life is in itself sometimes a warning indication. The change would pass away after a few minutes, during which she seemed unconscious, or, at least, never spoke, never appeared to heed what was said to her. But in the expression of her countenance there was no character of suffering or distress; on the contrary a wondrous serenity, that made her beauty more beauteous, her very youthfulness younger; and when this spurious or partial kind of syncope passed, she

recovered at once without effort, without acknowledging that she had felt faint or unwell, but rather with a sense of recruited vitality, as the weary obtain from a sleep. For the rest her spirits were more generally light and joyous than I should have premised from her mother's previous description. She would enter mirthfully into the mirth of young companions round her: she had evidently quick perception of the sunny sides of life; an infantine gratitude for kindness; an infantine joy in the trifles that amuse only those who delight in tastes pure and simple. But when talk rose into graver and more contemplative topics, her attention became earnest and absorbed; and, sometimes, a rich eloquence, such as I have never before nor since heard from lips so young, would startle me first into a wondering silence, and soon into a disapproving alarm: for the thoughts she then uttered seemed to me too fantastic, too visionary, too much akin to the vagaries of a wild though beautiful imagination. And then I would seek to check, to sober, to distract fancies with which my reason had no sympathy, and the indulgence of which I regarded as injurious to the normal functions of the brain.

When thus, sometimes with a chilling sentence, sometimes with a half-sarcastic laugh, I would repress outpourings frank and musical as the songs of a forest-bird, she would look at me with a kind of plaintive sorrow—often sigh and shiver as she turned away. Only in those modes did she show displeasure; otherwise ever sweet and docile, and ever, if, seeing that I had pained her, I asked forgiveness, humbling herself rather to ask mine, and brightening our reconciliation with her angel smile. As yet I had not dared to speak of love; as yet I gazed on her as the captive gazes on the flowers and the stars through the gratings of his cell, murmuring to himself, "When shall the doors unclose?"

CHAPTER XVI.

It was with a wrath suppressed in the presence of the fair ambassadress, that Mr. Vigors had received from Mrs. Poyntz the intelligence that I had replaced Dr. Jones at Abbots' House, not less abruptly than Dr. Jones had previously supplanted me. As Mrs. Poyntz took upon herself the whole responsibility of this change, Mr. Vigors did not venture to condemn it to her face; for the Administrator of Laws was at heart no little in awe of the Autocrat of Proprieties; as Authority, howsoever established, is in awe of Opinion, howsoever capricious.

To the mild Mrs. Ashleigh the magistrate's anger was more decidedly manifested. He ceased his visits; and in answer to a long and deprecatory letter with which she endeavored to soften his resentment and win him back to the house, he replied by an elaborate combination of homily and satire. He began by excusing himself from accepting her invitations, on the ground that *his* time was valuable, *his* habits domestic; and though ever willing to sacrifice both time and habits where he could do good, he owed it to himself and to mankind to sacrifice neither where his advice was rejected and his opinion contemned. He glanced briefly, but not hastily, at the respect with which her late husband had deferred to his judgment, and the benefits which that deference had enabled him to bestow. He contrasted the husband's deference with the widow's contumely, and hinted at the evils which the contumely would not permit him to prevent. He could not presume to say what women of the world might think due to deceased husbands, but even women of the world generally allowed the claims of living children, and did not act with levity where their interests were concerned, still less where their lives were at stake. As to Dr. Jones, he, Mr. Vigors, had the fullest confidence in his skill. Mrs. Ashleigh must judge for herself whether Mrs. Poyntz was as good an authority upon medical science as he had no doubt she was upon shawls and ribbons. Dr. Jones was a man of caution and modesty; he did not indulge in the hollow boasts by which charlatans decoy their dupes; but Dr. Jones had privately assured him that though the case was one that admitted of no rash experiments, he had no fear of the result if his own prudent system were persevered in. What might be the consequences of any other system, Dr. Jones would not say, because he was too high-minded to express his distrust of the rival who had made use of underhand arts to supplant him. But Mr. Vigors was convinced, from other sources of information (meaning, I presume, the oracular prescience of his clairvoyants), that the time would come when the poor young lady would herself insist on discarding Dr. Fenwick, and when "that person" would appear in a very different light to many who now so fondly admired and so reverentially trusted him. When that time arrived, he, Mr. Vigors, might again be of use; but, meanwhile, though he declined to renew his intimacy at Abbots' House, or to pay unavailing visits of mere ceremony, his interest in the daughter of his old friend remained undiminished, nay, was rather increased by compassion; that he should silently keep his eye upon her; and

whenever anything to her advantage suggested itself to him, he should not be deterred by the slight with which Mrs. Ashleigh had treated his judgment, from calling on her, and placing before her conscience as a mother his ideas for her child's benefit, leaving to herself then, as now, the entire responsibility of rejecting the advice which he might say, without vanity, was deemed of some value by those who could distinguish between sterling qualities and specious pretences.

Mrs. Ashleigh's was that thoroughly womanly nature which instinctively leans upon others. She was diffident, trustful, meek, affectionate. Not quite justly had Mrs. Poyntz described her as "commonplace weak," for though she might be called weak, it was not because she was commonplace; she had a goodness of heart, a sweetness of disposition, to which that disparaging definition could not apply. She could only be called commonplace, inasmuch as in the ordinary daily affairs of life she had a great deal of ordinary daily commonplace good sense. Give her a routine to follow, and no routine could be better adhered to. In the allotted sphere of a woman's duties she never seemed in fault. No household, not even Mrs. Poyntz's, was more happily managed. The old Abbots' House had merged its original antique gloom in the softer character of pleasing repose. All her servants adored Mrs. Ashleigh; all found it a pleasure to please her; her establishment had the harmony of clockwork; comfort diffused itself round her like quiet sunshine round a sheltered spot. To gaze on her pleasing countenance, to listen to the simple talk that lapsed from her guileless lips, in even, slow, and lulling murmur, was in itself a respite from "eating cares." She was to the mind what the color of green is to the eye. She had, therefore, excellent sense in all that relates to every-day life. There, she needed not to consult another; there, the wisest might have consulted her with profit. But the moment anything, however trivial in itself, jarred on the routine to which her mind had grown wedded; the moment an incident hurried her out of the beaten track of woman's daily life, then her confidence forsook her; then she needed a confidant, an adviser; and by that confidant or adviser she could be credulously lured or submissively controlled. Therefore when she lost, in Mr. Vigors, the guide she had been accustomed to consult whenever she needed guidance, she turned, helplessly and piteously, first to Mrs. Poyntz, and then yet more imploringly to me, because a woman of that character is never quite satisfied without the advice of a man. And where an intimacy more familiar than that of his formal

visits is once established with a physician, confidence in him grows fearless and rapid, as the natural result of sympathy concentred on an object of anxiety in common between himself and the home which opens its sacred recess to his observant but tender eye. Thus Mrs. Ashleigh had shown me Mr. Vigors's letter, and, forgetting that I might not be as amiable as herself, besought me to counsel her how to conciliate and soften her lost husband's friend and connection. That character clothed him with dignity and awe in her soft forgiving eyes. So, smothering my own resentment, less perhaps at the tone of offensive insinuation against myself than at the arrogance with which this prejudiced intermeddler implied to a mother the necessity of his guardian watch over a child under her own care, I sketched a reply which seemed to me both dignified and placatory, abstaining from all discussion, and conveying the assurance that Mrs. Ashleigh would be at all times glad to hear, and disposed to respect, whatever suggestion so esteemed a friend of her husband's would kindly submit to her for the welfare of her daughter.

There all communication had stopped for about a month since the date of my reintroduction to Abbots' House. One afternoon I unexpectedly met Mr. Vigors at the entrance of the blind lane, I on my way to Abbots' House, and my first glance at his face told me that he was coming from it, for the expression of that face was more than usually sinister; the sullen scowl was lit into significant menace by a sneer of unmistakable triumph. I felt at once that he had suceeded in some machination against me, and with ominous misgivings quickened my steps.

I found Mrs. Ashleigh seated alone in front of the house, under a large cedar-tree that formed a natural arbor in the centre of the sunny lawn. She was perceptibly embarrassed as I took my seat beside her.

"I hope," said I, forcing a smile, "that Mr. Vigors has not been telling you that I shall kill my patient, or that she looks much worse than she did under Dr. Jones's care?"

"No," she said. "He owned cheerfully that Lilian had grown quite strong, and said, without any displeasure, that he had heard how gay she had been, riding out and even dancing—which is very kind in him, for he disapproves of dancing, on principle."

"But still, I can see he has said something to vex or annoy you; and, to judge by his countenance when I met him in the lane, I should conjecture that that something was intended to lower the confidence you so kindly repose in me."

"I assure you not; he did not mention your name, either to me or to Lilian. I never knew him more friendly; quite like old times. He is a good man at heart, very, and was much attached to my poor husband."

"Did Mr. Ashleigh profess a very high opinion of Mr. Vigors?"

"Well, I don't quite know that, because my dear Gilbert never spoke to me much about him. Gilbert was naturally very silent. But he shrank from all trouble, all worldly affairs, and Mr. Vigors managed his estate, and inspected his steward's books, and protected him through a long lawsuit which he had inherited from his father. It killed his father. I don't know what we should have done without Mr. Vigors, and I am so glad he has forgiven me."

"Hem! Where is Miss Ashleigh? Indoors?"

"No; somewhere in the grounds. But, my dear Dr. Fenwick, do not leave me yet; you are so very, very kind, and somehow I have grown to look upon you quite as an old friend. Something has happened which has put me out—quite put me out."

She said this wearily and feebly, closing her eyes as if she were indeed put out in the sense of extinguished.

"The feeling of friendship you express," said I, with earnestness, "is reciprocal. On my side it is accompanied by a peculiar gratitude. I am a lonely man, by a lonely fireside—no parents, no near kindred, and in this town since Dr. Faber left it, without cordial intimacy till I knew you. In admitting me so familiarly to your hearth, you have given me what I have never known before since I came to man's estate—a glimpse of the happy domestic life; the charm and relief to eye, heart, and spirit which is never known but in households cheered by the face of woman; thus my sentiment for you and yours is indeed that of an old friend; and in any private confidence you show me, I feel as if I were no longer a lonely man, without kindred, without home."

Mrs. Ashleigh seemed much moved by these words, which my heart had forced from my lips, and, after replying to me with simple, unaffected warmth of kindness, she rose, took my arm, and continued thus as we walked slowly to and fro the lawn:

"You know, perhaps, that my poor husband left a sister, now a widow like myself, Lady Haughton."

"I remember that Mrs. Poyntz said you had such a sister-in-law, but I never heard you mention Lady Haughton till now. Well!"

"Well, Mr. Vigors has brought me a letter from her, and it is that which has put me out. I dare say you have not heard me speak before of Lady Haughton, for I am ashamed to say I had almost forgotten her existence. She is many years older than my husband was: of a very different character. Only came once to see him after our marriage. Hurt me by ridiculing him as a bookworm. Offended him by looking a little down on me, as a nobody without spirit and fashion, which was quite true. And, except by a cold and unfeeling letter of formal condolence after I lost my dear Gilbert, I have never heard from her since I have been a widow, till to-day. But, after all, she is my poor husband's sister, and his eldest sister, and Lilian's aunt; and, as Mr. Vigors says, 'Duty is duty.'"

Had Mrs. Ashleigh said "Duty is torture," she could not have uttered the maxim with more mournful and despondent resignation.

"And what does this lady require of you, which Mr. Vigors deems it your duty to comply with?"

"Dear me! What penetration! You have guessed the exact truth. But I think you will agree with Mr. Vigors. Certainly I have no option; yes, I must do it."

"My penetration is in fault now. Do what? Pray explain."

"Poor Lady Haughton, six months ago, lost her only son, Sir James. Mr. Vigors says he was a very fine young man, of whom any mother would have been proud. I had heard he was wild; Mr. Vigors says, however, that he was just going to reform, and marry a young lady whom his mother chose for him, when, unluckily, he would ride a steeplechase, not being quite sober at the time, and broke his neck. Lady Haughton has been, of course, in great grief. She has retired to Brighton; and she wrote to me from thence, and Mr. Vigors brought the letter. He will go back to her to-day."

"Will go back to Lady Haughton? What! Has he been to her? Is he, then, as intimate with Lady Haughton as he was with her brother?"

"No; but there has been a long and constant correspondence. She had a settlement on the Kirby Estate—a sum which was not paid off during Gilbert's life; and a very small part of the property went to Sir James, which part Mr. Ashleigh Sumner, the heir-at-law to the rest of the estate, wished Mr. Vigors, as his guardian, to buy during his minority, and as it was mixed up with Lady Haughton's settlement her consent was necessary as well as Sir James's. So there was much negotiation, and, since then, Ashleigh Sumner has come into the

Haughton property, on poor Sir James's decease; so that complicated all affairs between Mr. Vigors and Lady Haughton, and he has just been to Brighton to see her. And poor Lady Haughton, in short, wants me and Lilian to go and visit her. I don't like it at all. But you said the other day you thought sea air might be good for Lilian during the heat of the summer, and she seems well enough now for the change. What do you think?"

"She is well enough, certainly. But Brighton is not the place I would recommend for the summer; it wants shade and is much hotter than L——."

"Yes, but unluckily Lady Haughton foresaw that objection, and she has a jointure-house some miles from Brighton, and near the sea. She says the grounds are well wooded, and the place is proverbially cool and healthy, not far from St. Leonard's Forest. And, in short, I have written to say we will come. So we must, unless, indeed, you positively forbid it."

"When do you think of going?"

"Next Monday. Mr. Vigors would make me fix the day. If you knew how I dislike moving when I am once settled; and I do so dread Lady Haughton, she is so fine, and so satirical! But Mr. Vigors says she is very much altered, poor thing! I should like to show you her letter, but I had just sent it to Margaret—Mrs. Poyntz—a minute or two before you came. She knows something of Lady Haughton. Margaret knows everybody. And we shall have to go in mourning for poor Sir James, I suppose; and Margaret will choose it, for I am sure I can't guess to what extent we should be supposed to mourn. I ought to have gone in mourning before—poor Gilbert's nephew—but I am so stupid, and I have never seen him. And—but oh, this *is* kind! Margaret herself—my dear Margaret!"

We had just turned away from the house, in our up-and-down walk; and Mrs. Poyntz stood immediately fronting us.

"So, Anne, you have actually accepted this invitation—and for Monday next?"

"Yes. Did I do wrong?"

"What does Dr Fenwick say? Can Lilian go with safety?"

I could not honestly say she might not go with safety, but my heart sank like lead as I answered:

"Miss Ashleigh does not now need merely medical care; but more than half her cure has depended on keeping her spirits free from depression. She may miss the cheerful companionship of your daughter, and other young ladies of her own age.

A very melancholy house, saddened by a recent bereavement, without other guests; a hostess to whom she is a stranger, and whom Mrs. Ashleigh herself appears to deem formidable—certainly these do not make that change of scene which a physician would recommend. When I spoke of sea air being good for Miss Ashleigh, I thought of our own northern coasts at a later time of the year, when I could escape myself for a few weeks and attend her. The journey to a northern watering-place would be also shorter and less fatiguing; the air there more invigorating."

"No doubt that would be better," said Mrs. Poyntz dryly; "but so far as your objections to visiting Lady Haughton have been stated, they are groundless. Her house will not be melancholy; she will have other guests, and Lilian will find companions, young like herself—young ladies, and young gentlemen too!"

There was something ominous, something compassionate, in the look which Mrs. Poyntz cast upon me, in concluding her speech, which in itself was calculated to rouse the fears of a lover. Lilian away from me, in the house of a worldly fine lady, such as I judged Lady Haughton to be, surrounded by young gentlemen, as well as young ladies; by admirers, no doubt, of a higher rank and more brilliant fashion than she had yet known! I closed my eyes, and with strong effort suppressed a groan.

"My dear Anne, let me satisfy myself that Dr. Fenwick really *does* consent to this journey. He will say to me what he may not to you. Pardon me, then, if I take him aside for a few minutes. Let me find you here again under this cedar-tree."

Placing her arm in mine, and without waiting for Mrs. Ashleigh's answer, Mrs. Poyntz drew me into the more sequestered walk that belted the lawn; and, when we were out of Mrs. Ashleigh's sight and hearing, said:

"From what you have now seen of Lilian Ashleigh, do you still desire to gain her as your wife?"

"Still? Oh! with an intensity proportioned to the fear with which I now dread that she is about to pass away from my eyes—from my life!"

"Does your judgment confirm the choice of your heart? Reflect before you answer."

"Such selfish judgment as I had before I knew her would not confirm, but oppose it. The nobler judgment that now expands all my reasonings, approves and seconds my heart.

No, no; do not smile so sarcastically. This is not the voice of a blind and egotistical passion. Let me explain myself if I can. I concede to you that Lilian's character is undeveloped. I concede to you that, amidst the childlike freshness and innocence of her nature, there is at times a strangeness, a mystery, which I have not yet traced to its cause. But I am certain that the intellect is organically as sound as the heart, and that intellect and heart will ultimately—if under happy auspices—blend in that felicitous union which constitutes the perfection of woman. But it is because she does, and may for years, may perhaps always, need a more devoted, thoughtful care than natures less tremulously sensitive, that my judgment sanctions my choice; for whatever is best for her is best for me. And who would watch over her as I should?"

"You have never yet spoken to Lilian as lovers speak?"

"Oh, no, indeed."

"And, nevertheless, you believe that your affection would not be unreturned?"

"I thought so once; I doubt now—yet, in doubting, hope. But why do you alarm me with these questions? You, too, forebode that in this visit I may lose her forever?"

"If you fear that, tell her so, and perhaps her answer may dispel your fear."

"What now, already, when she has scarcely known me a month? Might I not risk all if too premature?"

"There is no almanac for love. With many women love is born the moment they know they are beloved. All wisdom tells us that a moment once gone is irrevocable. Were I in your place, I should feel that I approached a moment that I must not lose. I have said enough; now I shall rejoin Mrs. Ashleigh."

"Stay—tell me first what Lady Haughton's letter really contains to prompt the advice with which you so transport, and yet so daunt, me when you proffer it."

"Not now—later, perhaps—not now. If you wish to see Lilian alone, she is by the Old Monk's Well; I saw her seated there as I passed that way to the house."

"One word more—only one. Answer this question frankly, for it is one of honor. Do you still believe that my suit to her daughter would not be disapproved of by Mrs. Ashleigh?"

"At this moment, I am sure it would not; a week hence I might not give you the same answer."

So she passed on with her quick but measured tread, back through the shady walk, on to the open lawn, till the last glimpse

of her pale gray robe disappeared under the boughs of the cedar-tree. Then, with a start, I broke the irresolute, tremulous suspense in which I had vainly endeavored to analyze my own mind, solve my own doubts, concentrate my own will, and went the opposite way, skirting the circle of that haunted ground; as now, on one side its lofty terrace, the houses of the neighboring city came full and close into view divided from my fairyland of life but by the trodden murmurous thoroughfare winding low beneath the ivied parapets; and as now, again, the world of men abruptly vanished behind the screening foliage of luxuriant June.

At last the enchanted glade opened out from the verdure, its borders fragrant with syringa, and rose, and woodbine; and there, by the gray memorial of the gone Gothic age, my eyes seemed to close their unquiet wanderings, resting spellbound on that image which had become to me the incarnation of earth's bloom and youth.

She stood amidst the Past, backed by the fragments of walls which man had raised to seclude him from human passion, locking, under those lids so downcast, the secret of the only knowledge I asked from the boundless Future.

Ah, what mockery there is in that grand world, the world's fierce war-cry—Freedom! Who has not known one period of life, and that so solemn that its shadows may rest over all life hereafter, when one human creature has over him a sovereignty more supreme and absolute than Orient servitude adores in the symbols of diadem and sceptre? What crest so haughty that has not bowed before a hand which could exalt and humble! What heart so dauntless that has not trembled to call forth the voice at whose sound ope the gates of rapture or despair! That life alone is free which rules, and suffices for itself. That life we forfeit when we love!

CHAPTER XVII.

How did I utter it? By what words did my heart make itself known? I remember not. All was as a dream that falls upon a restless, feverish night, and fades away as the eyes unclose on the peace of a cloudless heaven, on the bliss of a golden sun. A new morrow seemed indeed upon the earth when I awoke from a life-long yesterday—her dear hand in mine, her sweet face bowed upon my breast.

And then there was that melodious silence in which there is

no sound audible from without; yet within us there is heard a lulling celestial music, as if our whole being, grown harmonious with the universe, joined from its happy deeps in the hymn that unites the stars.

In that silence our two hearts seemed to make each other understood, to be drawing nearer and nearer, blending by mysterious concord into the completeness of a solemn union, never henceforth to be rent asunder.

At length I said softly: "And it was here on this spot that I first saw you; here that I for the first time knew what power to change our world and to rule our future goes forth from the charm of a human face!"

Then Lilian asked me timidly, and without lifting her eyes, how I had so seen her, reminding me that I promised to tell her, and had never yet done so.

And then I told her of the strange impulse that had led me into the grounds, and by what chance my steps had been diverted down the path that wound to the glade; how suddenly her form had shone upon my eyes, gathering round itself the rose hues of the setting sun, and how wistfully those eyes had followed her own silent gaze into the distant heaven.

As I spoke, her hand pressed mine eagerly, convulsively, and, raising her face from my breast, she looked at me with an intent, anxious earnestness. That look! Twice before it had thrilled and perplexed me.

"What is there in that look, oh, my Lilian, which tells me that there is something that startles you—something you wish to confide, and yet shrink from explaining? See how, already, I study the fair book from which the seal has been lifted, but as yet you must aid me to construe its language."

"If I shrink from explaining, it is only because I fear that I cannot explain so as to be understood or believed. But you have a right to know the secrets of a life which you would link to your own. Turn your face aside from me; a reproving look, an incredulous smile, chill—oh! you cannot guess how they chill me, when I would approach that which to me is so serious and so solemnly strange."

I turned my face away, and her voice grew firmer as, after a brief pause, she resumed:

"As far back as I can remember in my infancy, there have been moments when there seems to fall a soft, hazy veil between my sight and the things around it, thickening and deepening till it has the likeness of one of those white, fleecy clouds which gather on the verge of the horizon when the air is yet

still, but the winds are about to rise; and then this vapor or veil will suddenly open, as clouds open and let in the blue sky.''

''Go on,'' I said gently, for here she came to a stop.

She continued, speaking somewhat more hurriedly:

''Then, in that opening, strange appearances present themselves to me, as in a vision. In my childhood these were chiefly landscapes of wonderful beauty. I could but faintly describe them then; I could not attempt to describe them now, for they are almost gone from my memory. My dear mother chid me for telling her what I saw, so I did not impress it on my mind by repeating it. As I grew up, this kind of vision, if I may so call it, became much less frequent, or much less distinct; I still saw the soft veil fall, the pale cloud form and open, but often what may then have appeared was entirely forgotten when I recovered myself, waking as from a sleep. Sometimes, however, the recollection would be vivid and complete; sometimes I saw the face of my lost father; sometimes I heard his very voice, as I had seen and heard him in my early childhood, when he would let me rest for hours beside him as he mused or studied, happy to be so quietly near him, for I loved him, oh, so dearly! and I remember him so distinctly, though I was only in my sixth year when he died. Much more recently—indeed, within the last few months—the images of things to come are reflected on the space that I gaze into as clearly as in a glass. Thus, for weeks before I came hither, or knew that such a place existed, I saw distinctly the old house, yon trees, this sward, this moss-grown Gothic fount, and, with the sight, an impression was conveyed to me that in the scene before me my old childlike life would pass into some solemn change. So that when I came here, and recognized the picture in my vision, I took an affection for the spot—an affection not without awe—a powerful, perplexing interest, as one who feels under the influence of a fate of which a prophetic glimpse has been vouchsafed. And in that evening, when you first saw me, seated here—''

''Yes, Lilian, on that evening—?''

''I saw you also, but in my vision—yonder, far in the deeps of space—and—and my heart was stirred as it had never been before; and near where your image grew out from the cloud I saw my father's face, and I heard his voice, not in my ear, but as in my heart, whispering—''

''Yes, Lilian, whispering—what?''

''These words—only these: 'Ye will need one another.'

But then, suddenly, between my upward eyes and the two forms they had beheld, there rose from the earth, obscuring the skies, a vague, dusky vapor, undulous, and coiling like a vast serpent, nothing, indeed, of its shape and figure definite, but of its face one abrupt glare; a flash from two dread luminous eyes, and a young head, like the Medusa's, changing, more rapidly than I could have drawn breath, into a grinning skull. Then my terror made me bow my head, and when I raised it again, all that I had seen was vanished. But the terror still remained, even when I felt my mother's arm round me and heard her voice. And then, when I entered the house, and sat down again alone, the recollection of what I had seen—those eyes, that face, that skull—grew on me stronger and stronger till I fainted, and remember no more, until my eyes, opening, saw you by my side. And in my wonder there was not terror. No, a sense of joy, protection, hope, yet still shadowed by a kind of fear or awe, in recognizing the countenance which had gleamed on me from the skies before the dark vapor had risen, and while my father's voice had murmured, 'Ye will need one another.' And now—and now—will you love me less that you know a secret in my being which I have told to no other—cannot construe to myself? Only—only, at least, do not mock me, do not disbelieve me! Nay, turn from me no longer now: now I ask to meet your eyes. Now, before our hands can join again, tell me that you do not despise me as untruthful, do not pity me as insane."

"Hush, hush!" I said, drawing her to my breast. "Of all you tell me we will talk hereafter. The scales of our science have no weights fine enough for the gossamer threads of a maiden's pure fancies. Enough for me—for us both—if out from all such illusions start one truth, told to you, lovely child, from the heavens; told to me, ruder man, on the earth; repeated by each pulse of this heart that woos you to hear and to trust; now and henceforth through life unto death, 'Each has need of the other,' I of you—I of you! my Lilian—my Lilian!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

In spite of the previous assurance of Mrs. Poyntz, it was not without an uneasy apprehension that I approached the cedar-tree, under which Mrs. Ashleigh still sat, her friend beside her. I looked on the fair creature whose arm was linked in mine. So young, so singularly lovely, and with all the gifts

of birth and fortune which bend avarice and ambition the more submissively to youth and beauty, I felt as if I had wronged what a parent might justly deem her natural lot.

"Oh, if your mother should disapprove!" said I falteringly.

Lilian leant on my arm less lightly: "If I had thought so," she said with her soft blush, "should I be thus by your side?"

So we passed under the boughs of the dark tree, and Lilian left me, and kissed Mrs. Ashleigh's cheek; then, seating herself on the turf, laid her head on her mother's lap. I looked on the Queen of the Hill, whose keen eye shot over me. I thought there was a momentary expression of pain or displeasure on her countenance; but it passed. Still there seemed to me something of irony, as well as of triumph or congratulation, in the half-smile with which she quitted her seat, and in the tone with which she whispered, as she glided by me to the open sward, "So, then, it is settled."

She walked lightly and quickly down the lawn. When she was out of sight I breathed more freely. I took the seat which she had left, by Mrs. Ashleigh's side, and said: "A little while ago I spoke of myself as a man without kindred, without home, and now I come to you and ask for both."

Mrs. Ashleigh looked at me benignly, then raised her daughter's face from her lap, and whispered, "Lilian"; and Lilian's lips moved, but I did not hear her answer. Her mother did. She took Lilian's hand, simply placed it in mine, and said, "As she chooses, I choose; whom she loves, I love."

CHAPTER XIX.

From that evening till the day Mrs. Ashleigh and Lilian went on the dreaded visit, I was always at their house, when my avocations allowed me to steal to it; and during those few days, the happiest I had ever known, it seemed to me that years could not have more deepened my intimacy with Lilian's exquisite nature, made me more reverential of its purity, or more enamoured of its sweetness. I could detect in her but one fault, and I rebuked myself for believing that it was a fault. We see many who neglect the minor duties of life, who lack watchful forethought and considerate care for others, and we recognize the cause of this failing in levity or egotism. Certainly, neither of those tendencies of character could be ascribed to Lilian. Yet still in daily trifles there was some-

thing of that neglect, some lack of that care and forethought. She loved her mother with fondness and devotion, yet it never occurred to her to aid in those petty household cares in which her mother centred so much of habitual interest. She was full of tenderness and pity to all want and suffering, yet many a young lady on the Hill was more actively beneficent, visiting the poor in their sickness, or instructing their children in the Infant Schools. I was persuaded that her love for me was deep and truthful; it was clearly void of all ambition; doubtless she would have borne, unflinching and contented, whatever the world considers to be sacrifice and privation—yet I should never have expected her to take her share in the troubles of ordinary life. I could never have applied to her the homely but significant name of helpmate. I reproach myself while I write for noticing such defect, if defect it were, in what may be called the practical routine of our positive, trivial, human existence. No doubt it was this that had caused Mrs. Poyntz's harsh judgment against the wisdom of my choice. But such chiller shade upon Lilian's charming nature was reflected from no inert, unamiable self-love. It was but the consequence of that self-absorption which the habit of revery had fostered. I cautiously abstained from all allusion to those visionary deceptions, which she had confided to me as the truthful impressions of spirit, if not of sense. To me any approach to what I termed superstition was displeasing; any indulgence of phantasies not within the measured and beaten tracks of healthful imagination, more than displeased me in her—it alarmed. I would not by a word encourage her in persuasions which I felt it would be at present premature to reason against, and cruel indeed to ridicule. I was convinced that of themselves these mists round her native intelligence, engendered by a solitary and musing childhood, would subside in the fuller daylight of wedded life. She seemed pained when she saw how resolutely I shunned a subject dear to her thoughts. She made one or two timid attempts to renew it, but my grave looks sufficed to check her. Once or twice indeed, on such occasions, she would turn away and leave me, but she soon came back; that gentle heart could not bear one unkindlier shade between itself and what it loved. It was agreed that our engagement should be, for the present, confided only to Mrs. Poyntz. When Mrs. Ashleigh and Lilian returned, which would be in a few weeks at furthest, it should be proclaimed; and our marriage could take place in the autumn, when I should be most free for a brief holiday from professional toils.

So we parted—as lovers part. I felt none of those jealous fears which, before we were affianced, had made me tremble at the thought of separation, and had conjured up irresistible rivals. But it was with a settled heavy gloom that I saw her depart. From earth was gone a glory: from life a blessing!

CHAPTER XX.

During the busy years of my professional career, I had snatched leisure for some professional treatises, which had made more or less sensation, and one of them entitled "The Vital Principle; its Waste and Supply," had gained a wide circulation among the general public. This last treatise contained the results of certain experiments, then new in chemistry, which were adduced in support of a theory I entertained as to the reinvigoration of the human system by principles similar to those which Liebig has applied to the replenishment of an exhausted soil, viz., the giving back to the frame those essentials to its nutrition which it has lost by the action or accident of time; or supplying that special pabulum or energy in which the individual organism is constitutionally deficient; and neutralizing or counterbalancing that in which it superabounds—a theory upon which some eminent physicians have more recently improved with signal success. But on these essays, slight and suggestive, rather than dogmatic, I set no value. I had been for the last two years engaged on a work of much wider range, endeared to me by a far bolder ambition—a work upon which I fondly hoped to found an enduring reputation as a severe and original physiologist. It was an "Inquiry into Organic Life," similar in comprehensiveness of survey to that by which the illustrious Müller, of Berlin, has enriched the science of our age; however inferior, alas! to that august combination of thought and learning, in the judgment which checks presumption, and the genius which adorns speculation. But at that day I was carried away by the ardor of composition, and I admired my performance because I loved my labor. This work had been entirely laid aside for the last agitated month: now that Lilian was gone, I resumed it earnestly, as the sole occupation that had power and charm enough to rouse me from the aching sense of void and loss.

The very night of the day she went, I reopened my MS. I had left off at the commencement of a chapter "Upon Knowledge as derived from our Senses." As my convictions on this

head were founded on the well-known arguments of Locke and Condillac against innate ideas, and on the reasonings by which Hume has resolved the combination of sensations into a general idea to an impulse arising merely out of habit, so I set myself to oppose, as a dangerous concession to the sentimentalities or mysticism of a pseudo-philosophy, the doctrine favored by most of our recent physiologists, and of which some of the most eminent of German metaphysicians have accepted the substance, though refining into a subtlety its positive form; I mean the doctrine which Müller himself has expressed in these words:

"That innate ideas may exist, cannot in the slightest degree be denied; it is, indeed, a fact. All the ideas of animals, which are induced by instinct, are innate and immediate: something presented to the mind, a desire to attain which is at the same time given. The new-born lamb and foal have such innate ideas, which lead them to follow their mother and suck the teats. Is it not in some measure the same with the intellectual ideas of man?"*

To this question I answered with an indignant "No!" A "Yes" would have shaken my creed of materialism to the dust. I wrote on rapidly, warmly. I defined the properties and meted the limits of natural laws, which I would not admit that a Deity himself could alter. I clamped and soldered dogma to dogma in the links of my tinkered logic, till out from my page, to my own complacent eye, grew Intellectual Man, as the pure formation of his material senses; mind, or what is called soul, born from and nurtured by them alone; through them to act, and to perish with the machine they moved. Strange, that at the very time my love for Lilian might have taught me that there are mysteries in the core of the feelings which my analysis of ideas could not solve, I should so stubbornly have opposed as unreal all that could be referred to the spiritual! Strange, that at the very time when the thought that I might lose from this life the being I had known scarce a month had just before so appalled me, I should thus complacently sit down to prove that, according to the laws of the nature which my passion obeyed, I must lose for eternity the blessing I now hoped I had won to my life! But how distinctly dissimilar is man in his conduct from man in his systems! See the poet reclined under forest-boughs, conning odes to his mistress; follow him out into the world; no mistress ever lived for him there!† See the

* Müller's Elements of Physiology, vol. ii., p. 134. Translated by Dr. Baley.

† Cowley, who wrote so elaborate a series of amatory poems, is said "never to have been

hard man of science, so austere in his passionless problems; follow him now where the brain rests from its toil, where the heart finds its Sabbath—what child is so tender, so yielding and soft?

But I had proved to my own satisfaction that poet and sage are dust, and no more, when the pulse ceases to beat. And on that consolatory conclusion my pen stopped.

Suddenly, beside me I distinctly heard a sigh—a compassionate, mournful sigh. The sound was unmistakable. I started from my seat, looked round, amazed to discover no one—no living thing! The windows were closed, the night was still. That sigh was not the wail of the wind. But there, in the darker angle of the room, what was that? A silvery whiteness, vaguely shaped as a human form, receding, fading, gone! Why, I know not, for no face was visible, no form, if form it were, more distinct than the colorless outline—why, I know not, but I cried aloud, "Lilian! Lilian!" My voice came strangely back to my own ear, I paused, then smiled, and blushed at my folly. "So I, too, have learned what is superstition," I muttered to myself. "And here is an anecdote at my own expense (as Müller frankly tells us anecdotes of the illusions which would haunt his eyes, shut or open)—an anecdote I may quote when I come to my Chapter on the Cheats of the Senses and Spectral Phantasms." I went on with my book, and wrote till the lights waned in the gray of the dawn. And I said then, in the triumph of my pride, as I laid myself down to rest: "I have written that which allots with precision man's place in the region of nature; written that which will found a school, form disciples; and race after race of those who cultivate truth through pure reason shall accept my bases if they enlarge my building." And again I heard the sigh, but this time it caused no surprise. "Certainly," I murmured, "a very strange thing is the nervous system!" So I turned on my pillow, and, wearied out, fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE next day, the last of the visiting patients to whom my forenoons were devoted had just quitted me, when I was summoned in haste to attend the steward of a Sir Philip Derval, not residing at his family seat, which was about five miles

in love but once, and then he never had resolution to tell his passion."—Johnson's "Lives of the Poets":—COWLEY.

from L——. It was rarely indeed that persons so far from the town, when of no higher rank than this applicant, asked my services. But it was my principle to go wherever I was summoned; my profession was not gain, it was healing, to which gain was the incident, not the essential. This case the messenger reported as urgent. I went on horseback, and rode fast; but swiftly as I cantered through the village that skirted the approach to Sir Philip Derval's park, the evident care bestowed on the accommodation of the cottagers forcibly struck me. I felt that I was on the lands of a rich, intelligent, and beneficent proprietor. Entering the park, and passing before the manor-house, the contrast between the neglect and decay of the absentee's stately hall and the smiling homes of his villagers was disconsolately mournful.

An imposing pile, built apparently by Vanbrugh, with decorated pilasters, pompous portico, and grand perron (or double flight of stairs to the entrance), enriched with urns and statues, but discolored, mildewed, chipped, half-hidden with unpruned creepers and ivy. Most of the windows were closed with shutters, decaying for want of paint; in some of the casements the panes were broken; the peacock perched on the shattered balustrade, that fenced a garden overgrown with weeds. The sun glared hotly on the place, and made its ruinous condition still more painfully apparent. I was glad when a winding in the park-road shut the house from my sight. Suddenly I emerged through a copse of ancient yew-trees, and before me there gleamed, in abrupt whiteness, a building evidently designed for the family mausoleum—classical in its outlines, with the blind iron door niched into stone walls of massive thickness, and surrounded by a funeral garden of roses and evergreens, fenced with an iron rail, parti-gilt.

The suddenness with which this House of the Dead came upon me heightened almost into pain, if not into awe, the dismal impression which the aspect of the deserted home in its neighborhood had made. I spurred my horse and soon arrived at the door of my patient, who lived in a fair brick house at the other extremity of the park.

I found my patient, a man somewhat advanced in years, but of a robust conformation, in bed: he had been seized with a fit, which was supposed to be apoplectic, a few hours before; but was already sensible, and out of immediate danger. After I had prescribed a few simple remedies, I took aside the patient's wife, and went with her to the parlor below stairs, to make some inquiry about her husband's ordinary regimen and habits

of life. These seemed sufficiently regular; I could discover no apparent cause for the attack, which presented symptoms not familiar to my experience. "Has your husband ever had such fits before?"

"Never!"

"Had he experienced any sudden emotion? Had he heard any unexpected news? Or had anything happened to put him out?"

The woman looked much disturbed at these inquiries. I pressed them more urgently. At last she burst into tears, and clasping my hand, said: "Oh! doctor, I ought to tell you—I sent for you on purpose—yet I fear you will not believe me: My good man has seen a ghost!"

"A ghost!" said I, repressing a smile. "Well, tell me all, that I may prevent the ghost coming again."

The woman's story was prolix. Its substance was this: Her husband, habitually an early riser, had left his bed that morning still earlier than usual, to give directions about some cattle that were to be sent for sale to a neighboring fair. An hour afterwards he had been found by a shepherd, near the mausoleum, apparently lifeless. On being removed to his own house, he had recovered speech, and bidding all except his wife leave the room, he then told her that on walking across the park towards the cattle-sheds, he had seen what appeared to him at first a pale light by the iron door of the mausoleum. On approaching near, this light changed into the distinct and visible form of his master, Sir Philip Derval, who was then abroad—supposed to be in the East, where he had resided for many years. The impression on the steward's mind was so strong, that he called out, "Oh! Sir Philip!" when looking still more intently, he perceived that the face was that of a corpse. As he continued to gaze the apparition seemed gradually to recede as if vanishing into the sepulchre itself. He knew no more; he became unconscious. It was the excess of the poor woman's alarm, on hearing this strange tale, that made her resolve to send for me instead of the parish apothecary. She fancied so astounding a cause for her husband's seizure could only be properly dealt with by some medical man reputed to have more than ordinary learning. And the steward himself objected to the apothecary in the immediate neighborhood, as more likely to annoy him by gossip than a physician from a comparative distance.

I took care not to lose the confidence of the good wife by parading too quickly my disbelief in the phantom her husband

declared that he had seen; but as the story itself seemed at once to decide the nature of the fit to be epileptic, I began to tell her of similar delusions which, in my experience, had occurred to those subjected to epilepsy, and finally soothed her into the conviction that the apparition was cleary reducible to natural causes. Afterwards, I led her on to talk about Sir Philip Derval, less from any curiosity I felt about the absent proprietor than from a desire to refamiliarize her own mind to his image as a living man. The steward had been in the service of Sir Philip's father, and had known Sir Philip himself from a child. He was warmly attached to his master, whom the old woman described as a man of rare benevolence and great eccentricity, which last she imputed to his studious habits. He had succeeded to the title and estates as a minor. For the first few years after attaining his majority, he had mixed much in the world. When at Derval Court his house had been filled with gay companions, and was the scene of lavish hospitality. But the estate was not in proportion to the grandeur of the mansion, still less to the expenditure of the owner. He had become greatly embarrassed; and some love disappointment (so it was rumored) occurring simultaneously with his pecuniary difficulties, he had suddenly changed his way of life, shut himself up from his old friends, lived in seclusion, taking to books and scientific pursuits, and, as the old woman said vaguely and expressively, "to odd ways." He had gradually by an economy that, towards himself, was penurious, but which did not preclude much judicious generosity to others, cleared off his debts, and, once more rich, he had suddenly quitted the country, and taken to a life of travel. He was now about forty-eight years old, and had been eighteen years abroad. He wrote frequently to his steward, giving him minute and thoughtful instructions in regard to the employment, comforts, and homes of the peasantry, but peremptorily ordering him to spend no money on the grounds and mansion, stating as a reason why the latter might be allowed to fall into decay, his intention to pull it down whenever he returned to England.

I stayed some time longer than my engagements well warranted at my patient's house, not leaving till the sufferer, after a quiet sleep, had removed from his bed to his arm-chair, taken food, and seemed perfectly recovered from his attack.

Riding homeward, I mused on the difference that education makes, even pathologically, between man and man. Here was a brawny inhabitant of rural fields, leading the healthiest of lives, not conscious of the faculty we call imagination, stricken

down almost to Death's door by his fright at an optical illusion, explicable, if examined, by the same simple causes which had impressed me the night before with a moment's belief in a sound and a spectre—me who, thanks to sublime education, went so quietly to sleep a few minutes after, convinced that no phantom, the ghostliest that ear ever heard or eye ever saw, can be anything else but a nervous phenomenon.

CHAPTER XXII.

THAT evening I went to Mrs. Poyntz's: it was one of her ordinary "reception nights," and I felt that she would naturally expect my attendance as "a proper attention."

I joined a group engaged in general conversation, of which Mrs. Pyontz herself made the centre, knitting as usual—rapidly while she talked, slowly when she listened.

Without mentioning the visit I had paid that morning, I turned the conversation on the different country places in the neighborhood, and then incidentally asked, "What sort of a man is Sir Philip Derval? Is it not strange that he should suffer so fine a place to fall into decay?" The answers I received added little to the information I had already obtained. Mrs. Poyntz knew nothing of Sir Philip Derval, except as a man of large estates, whose rental had been greatly increased by a rise in the value of property he possessed in the town of L——, and which lay contiguous to that of her husband. Two or three of the older inhabitants of the Hill had remembered Sir Philip in his early days, when he was gay, high-spirited, hospitable, lavish. One observed that the only person in L—— whom he had admitted to his subsequent seclusion was Dr. Lloyd, who was then without practice, and whom he had employed as an assistant in certain chemical experiments.

Here a gentleman struck into the conversation. He was a stranger to me and to L——, a visitor to one of the dwellers on the Hill, who had asked leave to present him to its queen as a great traveller and an accomplished antiquary.

Said this gentleman: "Sir Philip Derval! I know him. I met him in the East. He was then still, I believe, very fond of chemical science; a clever, odd, philanthropical man; had studied medicine, or at least practised it; was said to have made many marvellous cures. I became acquainted with him in Aleppo. He had come to that town, not much frequented by English travellers, in order to inquire into the murder of two

men, of whom one was his friend and the other his countryman."

"This is interesting," said Mrs. Poyntz dryly. "We who live on this innocent Hill all love stories of crime; murder is the pleasantest subject you could have hit on. Pray give us the details."

"So encouraged," said the traveller good-humoredly, "I will not hesitate to communicate the little I know. In Aleppo, there had lived for some years a man who was held by the natives in great reverence. He had the reputation of extraordinary wisdom, but was difficult of access; the lively imagination of the Orientals invested his character with the fascinations of fable; in short, Haroun of Aleppo was popularly considered a magician. Wild stories were told of his powers, of his preternatural age, of his hoarded treasures. Apart from such disputable titles to homage, there seemed no question, from all I heard, that his learning was considerable, his charities extensive, his manner of life irreproachably ascetic. He appears to have resembled those Arabian sages of the Gothic age to whom modern science is largely indebted—a mystic enthusiast, but an earnest scholar. A wealthy and singular Englishman, long resident in another part of the East, afflicted by some languishing disease, took a journey to Aleppo to consult this sage, who, among his other acquirements, was held to have discovered rare secrets in medicine—his countrymen said in 'charms.' One morning, not long after the Englishman's arrival, Haroun was found dead in his bed, apparently strangled, and the Englishman, who lodged in another part of the town, had disappeared; but some of his clothes, and a crutch on which he habitually supported himself, were found a few miles distant from Aleppo, near the roadside. There appeared no doubt that he, too, had been murdered, but his corpse could not be discovered. Sir Philip Derval had been a loving disciple of this Sage of Aleppo, to whom he assured me he owed not only that knowledge of medicine which, by report, Sir Philip possessed, but the insight into various truths of nature, on the promulgation of which, it was evident, Sir Philip cherished the ambition to found a philosophical celebrity for himself."

"Of what description were those truths of nature?" I asked, somewhat sarcastically.

"Sir, I am unable to tell you, for Sir Philip did not inform me, nor did I much care to ask; for what may be revered as truths in Asia are usually despised as dreams in Europe. To

return to my story. Sir Philip had been in Aleppo a little time before the murder; had left the Englishman under the care of Haroun; he returned to Aleppo on hearing the tragic events I have related, and was busied in collecting such evidence as could be gleaned, and instituting inquiries after our missing countryman, at the time I myself chanced to arrive in the city. I assisted in his researches, but without avail. The assassins remained undiscovered. I do not myself doubt that they were mere vulgar robbers. Sir Philip had a darker suspicion, of which he made no secret to me; but as I confess that I thought the suspicion groundless, you will pardon me if I do not repeat it. Whether, since I left the East, the Englishman's remains have been discovered, I know not. Very probably; for I understand that his heirs have got hold of what fortune he left—less than was generally supposed. But it was reported that he had buried great treasures, a rumor, however absurd, not altogether inconsistent with his character."

"What was his character?" asked Mrs. Poyntz.

"One of evil and sinister repute. He was regarded with terror by the attendants who had accompanied him to Aleppo. But he had lived in a very remote part of the East, little known to Europeans, and, from all I could learn, had there established an extraordinary power, strengthened by superstitious awe. He was said to have studied deeply that knowledge which the philosophers of old called 'occult,' not, like the Sage of Aleppo, for benevolent, but for malignant, ends. He was accused of conferring with evil spirits, and filling his barbaric court (for he lived in a kind of savage royalty) with charmers and sorcerers. I suspect, after all, that he was only, like myself, an ardent antiquary, and cunningly made use of the fear he inspired in order to secure his authority, and prosecute in safety researches into ancient sepulchres or temples. His great passion was, indeed, in excavating such remains, in his neighborhood; with what result I know not, never having penetrated so far into regions infested by robbers and pestiferous with malaria. He wore the Eastern dress, and always carried jewels about him. I came to the conclusion that for the sake of these jewels he was murdered, perhaps by some of his own servants (and, indeed, two at least of his suite were missing), who then at once buried his body, and kept their own secret. He was old, very infirm; could never have got far from the town without assistance."

"You have not yet told us his name," said Mrs. Poyntz.

"His name was Grayle."

"Grayle!" exclaimed Mrs. Poyntz, dropping her work, "Louis Grayle?"

"Yes; Louis Grayle. You could not have known him?"

"Known him! No! But I have often heard my father speak of him. Such, then, was the tragic end of that strong, dark creature, for whom, as a young girl in the nursery, I used to feel a kind of fearful admiring interest?"

"It is your turn to narrate now," said the traveller.

And we all drew closer round our hostess, who remained silent some moments, her brow thoughtful, her work suspended.

"Well," said she at last, looking round us with a lofty air, which seemed half-defying, "force and courage are always fascinating, even when they are quite in the wrong. I go with the world, because the world goes with me; if it did not—" Here she stopped for a moment, clenched the firm white hand, and then scornfully waved it, left the sentence unfinished, and broke into another:

"Going with the world, of course we must march over those who stand against it. But when one man stands single-handed against our march, we do not despise him; it is enough to crush. I am very glad I did not see Louis Grayle when I was a girl of sixteen." Again she paused a moment, and resumed: "Louis Grayle was the only son of a usurer, infamous for the rapacity with which he had acquired enormous wealth. Old Grayle desired to rear his heir as a gentleman; sent him to Eton; boys are always aristocratic; his birth was soon thrown in his teeth; he was fierce; he struck boys bigger than himself—fought till he was half-killed. My father was at school with him; described him as a tiger-whelp. One day he—still a fag—struck a sixth-form boy. Sixth-form boys do not fight fags; they punish them. Louis Grayle was ordered to hold out his hand to the cane; he received the blow, drew forth his schoolboy knife, and stabbed the punisher. After that, he left Eton. I don't think he was publicly expelled—too mere a child for that honor—but he was taken or sent away: educated with great care under the first masters at home: when he was of age to enter the University, old Grayle was dead. Louis was sent by his guardians to Cambridge, with acquirements far exceeding the average of young men, and with unlimited command of money. My father was at the same college, and described him again—haughty, quarrelsome, reckless, handsome, aspiring, brave. Does that kind of creature interest you, my dears?" (appealing to the ladies).

"La!" said Miss Brabazon; "a horrid usurer's son!"

"Ay, true; the vulgar proverb says it is good to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth; so it is when one has one's own family crest on it; but when it is a spoon on which people recognize their family crest, and cry out, 'Stolen from our plate-chest,' it is a heritage that outlaws a babe in his cradle. However, young men at college who want money are less scrupulous about descent than boys at Eton are. Louis Grayle found, while at college, plenty of well-born acquaintances willing to recover from him some of the plunder his father had extorted from theirs. He was too wild to distinguish himself by academical honors, but my father said that the tutors of the college declared there were not six undergraduates in the University who knew as much hard and dry science as wild Louis Grayle. He went into the world, no doubt hoping to shine; but his father's name was too notorious to admit the son into good society. The Polite World, it is true, does not examine a scutcheon with the nice eye of a herald, nor look upon riches with the stately contempt of a stoic; still the Polite World has its family pride and its moral sentiment. It does not like to be cheated—I mean, in money matters; and when the son of the man who has emptied its purse and foreclosed on its acres rides by its club-windows, hand on haunch, and head in the air, no lion has a scowl more awful, no hyena a laugh more dread, than that same easy, good-tempered, tolerant, polite, well-bred World which is so pleasant an acquaintance, so languid a friend, and—so remorseless an enemy. In short, Louis Grayle claimed the right to be courted—he was shunned; to be admired—he was loathed. Even his old college acquaintances were shamed out of knowing him. Perhaps he could have lived through all this had he sought to glide quietly into position; but he wanted the tact of the well-bred, and strove to storm his way, not to steal it. Reduced for companions to needy parasites, he braved and he shocked all decorous opinion by that ostentation of excess which made Richelieus and Lauzuns the rage. But then Richelieus and Lauzuns were dukes! He now very naturally took the Polite World into hate; gave it scorn for scorn. He would ally himself with Democracy; his wealth could not get him into a club, but it would buy him into Parliament; he could not be a Lauzun, nor, perhaps, a Mirabeau, but he might be a Danton. He had plenty of knowledge and audacity, and with knowledge and audacity a good hater is sure to be eloquent. Possibly, then, this poor Louis Grayle might have made a great figure,

left his mark on his age and his name in history; but in contesting the borough, which he was sure to carry, he had to face an opponent in a real fine gentleman whom his father had ruined, cool and high-bred, with a tongue like a rapier, a sneer like an adder. A quarrel of course; Louis Grayle sent a challenge. The fine gentleman, known to be no coward (fine gentlemen never are), was at first disposed to refuse with contempt. But Grayle had made himself the idol of the mob; and at a word from Grayle, the fine gentleman might have been ducked at a pump, or tossed in a blanket—that would have made him ridiculous; to be shot at is a trifle, to be laughed at is serious. He therefore condescended to accept the challenge, and my father was his second.

"It was settled, of course, according to English custom, that both combatants should fire at the same time, and by signal. The antagonist fired at the right moment; his ball grazed Louis Grayle's temple. Louis Grayle had not fired. He now seemed to the seconds to take slow and deliberate aim. They called out to him not to fire—they were rushing to prevent him—when the trigger was pulled, and his opponent fell dead on the field. The fight was, therefore, considered unfair; Louis Grayle was tried for his life; he did not stand the trial in person.* He escaped to the Continent; hurried on to some distant uncivilized lands; could not be traced; reappeared in England no more. The lawyer who conducted his defence pleaded skilfully. He argued that the delay in firing was not intentional, therefore not criminal—the effect of the stun which the wound in the temple had occasioned. The judge was a gentleman, and summed up the evidence so as to direct the jury to a verdict against the low wretch who had murdered a gentleman. But the jurors were not gentlemen, and Grayle's advocate had of course excited their sympathy for a son of the people whom a gentleman had wantonly insulted—the verdict was manslaughter. But the sentence emphatically marked the aggravated nature of the homicide—three years' imprisonment. Grayle eluded the prison, but he was a man disgraced and an exile: his ambition blasted, his career an outlaw's, and his age not yet twenty-three. My father said that he was supposed to have changed his name; none knew what had become of him. And so this creature, brilliant and daring, whom if born under better auspices we might now be all fawning on, cringing to, after living to old

* Mrs. Poyntz here makes a mistake in law which, though very evident, her listeners do not seem to have noticed. Her mistake will be referred to later.

age, no one knows how—dies murdered at Aleppo, no one, you say, knows by whom."

"I saw some account of his death in the papers about three years ago," said one of the party; "but the name was misspelt, and I had no idea that it was the same man who had fought the duel which Mrs. Colonel Poyntz has so graphically described. I have a very vague recollection of the trial; it took place when I was a boy, more than forty years since. The affair made a stir at the time, but was soon forgotten."

"Soon forgotten," said Mrs. Poyntz; "Ay, what is not? Leave your place in the world for ten minutes, and when you come back somebody else has taken it; but when you leave the world for good, who remembers that you had ever a place even in the parish register?"

"Nevertheless," said I, "a great poet has said, finely and truly:

'The sun of Homer shines upon us still.'"

"But it does not shine upon Homer; and learned folks tell me that we know no more who and what Homer was, if there was ever a single Homer at all, or, rather, a whole herd of Homers, than we know about the man in the moon—if there be one man there, or millions of men. Now, my dear Miss Brabazon, it will be very kind in you to divert our thoughts into channels less gloomy. Some pretty French air—Dr. Fenwick, I have something to say to you." She drew me towards the window. "So Anne Ashleigh writes me word that I am not to mention your engagement. Do you think it quite prudent to keep it a secret?"

"I do not see how prudence is concerned in keeping it secret one way or the other: it is a mere matter of feeling. Most people wish to abridge, as far as they can, the time in which their private arrangements are the topics of public gossip."

"Public gossip is sometimes the best security for the due completion of private arrangements. As long as a girl is not known to be engaged, her betrothed must be prepared for rivals. Announce the engagement, and rivals are warned off."

"I fear no rivals."

"Do you not? Bold man! I suppose you will write to Lilian?"

"Certainly."

"Do so, and constantly. By the way, Mrs. Ashleigh, before she went, asked me to send her back Lady Haughton's letter of invitation. What for? To show to you?"

"Very likely. Have you the letter still? May I see it?"

"Not just at present. When Lilian or Mrs. Ashleigh writes to you, come and tell me how they like their visit, and what other guests form the party."

Therewith she turned away and conversed apart with the traveller.

Her words disquieted me, and I felt that they were meant to do so; wherefore I could not guess. But there is no language on earth which has more words with a double meaning than that spoken by the Clever Woman, who is never so guarded as when she appears to be frank.

As I walked home thoughtfully, I was accosted by a young man, the son of one of the wealthiest merchants in the town. I had attended him with success, some months before, in a rheumatic fever: he and his family were much attached to me.

"Ah, my dear Fenwick, I am so glad to see you; I owe you an obligation of which you are not aware: an exceedingly pleasant travelling companion. I came with him to-day from London, where I have been sight-seeing and holiday-making for the last fortnight."

"I suppose you mean that you kindly bring me a patient?"

"No, only an admirer. I was staying at Fenton's Hotel. It so happened one day that I had left in the coffee-room your last work on the Vital Principle, which, by the by, the bookseller assures me is selling immensely among readers as non-professional as myself. Coming into the coffee-room again, I found a gentleman reading the book. I claimed it politely; he as politely tendered his excuses for taking it. We made acquaintance on the spot. The next day we were intimate. He expressed great interest and curiosity about your theory and your experiments. I told him I knew you. You may guess if I described you as less clever in your practice than you are in your writings. And, in short, he came with me to L——, partly to see our flourishing town, principally on my promise to introduce him to you. My mother, you know, has what she calls a *déjeuner* to-morrow—*déjeuner* and dance. You will be there?"

"Thank you for reminding me of her invitation. I will avail myself of it if I can. Your new friend will be present? Who and what is he? A medical student?"

"No, a mere gentleman at ease; but seems to have a good deal of general information. Very young; apparently very rich; wonderfully good-looking. I am sure you will like him; everybody must."

"It is quite enough to prepare me to like him that he is a friend of yours." And so we shook hands and parted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was late in the afternoon of the following day before I was able to join the party assembled at the merchant's house; it was a villa about two miles out of the town, pleasantly situated, amidst flower-gardens celebrated in the neighborhood for their beauty. The breakfast had long been over; the company was scattered over the lawn; some formed into a dance on the smooth lawn; some seated under shady awnings; others gliding amidst parterres, in which all the glow of color took a glory yet more vivid under the flush of a brilliant sunshine, and the ripple of a soft western breeze. Music, loud and lively, mingled with the laughter of happy children, who formed much the larger number of the party.

Standing at the entrance of an arched trellis, that led from the hardier flowers of the lawn to a rare collecton of tropical plants under a lofty glass dome (connecting, as it were, the familiar vegetation of the North with that of the remotest East), was a form that instantaneously caught and fixed my gaze. The entrance of the arcade was covered with parasite creepers, in prodigal luxuriance, of variegated gorgeous tints,—scarlet, golden, purple; and the form, an idealized picture of man's youth fresh from the hand of Nature, stood literally in a frame of blooms.

Never have I seen a human face so radiant as that young man's. There was in the aspect an indescribable something that literally dazzled. As one continued to gaze, it was with surprise; one was forced to acknowledge that in the features themselves there was no faultless regularity; nor was the young man's stature imposing—about the middle height. But the effect of the whole was not less transcendent. Large eyes, unspeakably lustrous; a most harmonious coloring; an expression of contagious animation and joyousness; and the form itself so critically fine, that the welded strength of its sinews was best shown in the lightness and grace of its movements.

He was resting one hand carelessly on the golden locks of a child that had nestled itself against his knees, looking up to his face in that silent loving wonder with which children regard something too strangely beautiful for noisy admiration; he

himself was conversing with the host, an old gray-haired, gouty man, propped on his crutched stick, and listening with a look of mournful envy. To the wealth of the old man all the flowers in that garden owed their renewed delight in the summer air and sun. Oh! that his wealth could renew to himself one hour of the youth whose incarnation stood beside him, Lord, indeed, of Creation; its splendor woven into his crown of beauty, its enjoyments subject to his sceptre of hope and gladness.

I was startled by the hearty voice of the merchant's son: "Ah, my dear Fenwick, I was afraid you would not come; you are late. There is the new friend of whom I spoke to you last night; let me now make you acquainted with him." He drew my arm in his, and led me up to the young man, where he stood under the arching flowers, and whom he then introduced to me by the name of Margrave.

Nothing could be more frankly cordial than Mr. Margrave's manner. In a few minutes I found myself conversing with him familiarly, as if we had been reared in the same home, and sported together in the same playground. His vein of talk was peculiar, off-hand, careless, shifting from topic to topic with a bright rapidity.

He said that he liked the place; proposed to stay in it some weeks; asked my address, which I gave to him; promised to call soon at an early hour, while my time was yet free from professional visits. I endeavored, when I went away, to analyze to myself the fascination which this young stranger so notably exercised over all who approached him; and it seemed to me, ever seeking to find material causes for all moral effects, that it rose from the contagious vitality of that rarest of all rare gifts in highly civilized circles—perfect health; that health which is in itself the most exquisite luxury; which, finding happiness in the mere sense of existence, diffuses round it, like an atmosphere, the harmless hilarity of its bright animal being. Health, to the utmost perfection, is seldom known after childhood; health to the utmost cannot be enjoyed by those who overwork the brain, or admit the sure wear and tear of the passions. The creature I had just seen gave me the notion of youth in the golden age of the poets—the youth of the careless Arcadian, before nymph or shepherdess had vexed his heart with a sigh.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE house I occupied at L—— was a quaint, old-fashioned building—a corner-house. One side, in which was the front entrance, looked upon a street which, as there were no shops in it, and it was no direct thoroughfare to the busy centres of the town, was always quiet, and at some hours of the day almost deserted. The other side of the house fronted a lane; opposite to it was the long and high wall of the garden to a Young Ladies' Boarding-School. My stables adjoined the house, abutting on a row of smaller buildings, with little gardens before them, chiefly occupied by mercantile clerks and retired tradesmen. By the lane there was a short and ready access both to the high turnpike-road, and to some pleasant walks through green meadows and along the banks of a river.

This house I had inhabited since my arrival at L——, and it had to me so many attractions, in a situation sufficiently central to be convenient for patients, and yet free from noise, and favorable to ready outlet into the country for such foot or horse exercise as my professional avocations would allow me to carve for myself out of what the Latin poet calls the "solid day," that I had refused to change it for one better suited to my increased income; but it was not a house which Mrs. Ashleigh would have liked for Lilian. The main objection to it in the eyes of the "genteel" was, that it had formerly belonged to a member of the healing profession, who united the shop of an apothecary to the diploma of a surgeon; but that shop had given the house a special attraction to me; for it had been built out on the side of the house which fronted the lane, occupying the greater portion of a small gravel court, fenced from the road by a low iron palisade, and separated from the body of the house itself by a short and narrow corridor that communicated with the entrance-hall. This shop I turned into a rude study for scientific experiments, in which I generally spent some early hours of the morning, before my visiting patients began to arrive. I enjoyed the stillness of its separation from the rest of the house; I enjoyed the glimpse of the great chestnut-trees, which overtopped the wall of the school-garden; I enjoyed the ease with which, by opening the glazed sash-door, I could get out if disposed, for a short walk, into the pleasant fields; and so completely had I made this sanctuary my own, that not only my man-servant knew that I was never to be disturbed when in it, except by the summons of a patient,

but even the housemaid was forbidden to enter it with broom or duster, except upon special invitation. The last thing at night, before retiring to rest, it was the man-servant's business to see that the sash-window was closed, and the gate to the iron palisade locked; but during the daytime I so often went out of the house by that private way that the gate was then very seldom locked, nor the sash-door bolted from within. In the town of L—— there was little apprehension of house-robberies, especially in the daylight; and certainly in this room, cut off from the main building, there was nothing to attract a vulgar cupidity. A few of the apothecary's shelves and cases still remained on the walls, with, here and there, a bottle of some chemical preparation for experiment. Two or three worm-eaten, wooden chairs; two or three shabby old tables; an old walnut-tree bureau, without a lock, into which odds and ends were confusedly thrust, and sundry ugly-looking inventions of mechanical science, were, assuredly, not the articles which a timid proprietor would guard with jealous care from the chances of robbery. It will be seen later why I have been thus prolix in description. The morning after I had met the young stranger by whom I had been so favorably impressed, I was up as usual, a little before the sun, and long before any of my servants were astir. I went first into the room I have mentioned, and which I shall henceforth designate as my study, opened the window, unlocked the gate, and sauntered for some minutes up and down the silent lane skirting the opposite wall, and overhung by the chestnut-trees rich in the garniture of a glorious summer; then, refreshed for work, I re-entered my study, and was soon absorbed in the examination of that now well-known machine, which was then, to me at least, a novelty; invented, if I remember right, by Du Bois-Reymond, so distinguished by his researches into the mysteries of organic electricity. It is a wooden cylinder fixed against the edge of a table; on the table two vessels filled with salt and water are so placed that, as you close your hands on the cylinder, the forefinger of each hand can drop into the water; each of the vessels has a metallic plate, and communicates by wires with a galvanometer with its needle. Now the theory is, that if you clutch the cylinder firmly with the right hand, leaving the left perfectly passive, the needle in the galvanometer will move from west to south; if, in like manner, you exert the left arm, leaving the right arm passive, the needle will deflect from west to north. Hence, it is argued that the electric current is induced through the agency of the nervous system, and that, as human

Will produces the muscular contraction requisite, so is it human Will that causes the deflection of the needle. I imagined that if this theory were substantiated by experiment, the discovery might lead to some sublime and unconjectured secrets of science. For human Will, thus actively effective on the electric current, and all matter, animate or inanimate, having more or less of electricity, a vast field became opened to conjecture. By what series of patient experimental deduction might not science arrive at the solution of problems which the Newtonian law of gravitation does not suffice to solve; and— But here I halt. At the date which my story has reached my mind never lost itself long in the Cloudland of Guess.

I was dissatisfied with my experiment. The needle stirred, indeed, but erratically, and not in directions which, according to the theory, should correspond to my movement. I was about to dismiss the trial with some uncharitable contempt of the foreign philosopher's dogmas, when I heard a loud ring at my street door. While I paused to conjecture whether my servant was yet up to attend to the door, and which of my patients was the most likely to summon me at so unreasonable an hour, a shadow darkened my window. I looked up, and to my astonishment beheld the brilliant face of Mr. Margrave. The sash to the door was already partially opened; he raised it higher, and walked into the room. "Was it you who rang at the street door, and at this hour?" said I.

"Yes; and observing, after I had rung, that all the shutters were still closed, I felt ashamed of my own rash action, and made off rather than brave the reproachful face of some injured housemaid, robbed of her morning dreams. I turned down that pretty lane, lured by the green of the chestnut-trees, caught sight of you through the window, took courage, and here I am! You forgive me?" While thus speaking, he continued to move along the littered floor of the dingy room, with the undulating restlessness of some wild animal in the confines of its den, and he now went on, in short fragmentary sentences, very slightly linked together, but smoothed, as it were, into harmony by a voice musical and fresh as a skylark's warble. "Morning dreams, indeed! Dreams that waste the life of such a morning. Rosy magnificence of a summer dawn! Do you not pity the fool who prefers to lie abed, and to dream rather than to live? What! And you, strong man, with those noble limbs, in this den! Do you not long for a rush through the green of the fields, a bath in the blue of the river?"

Here he came to a pause, standing, still in the gray light of

the growing day, with eyes whose joyous lustre forestalled the sun's, and lips which seemed to laugh even in repose.

But presently those eyes, as quick as they were bright, glanced over the walls, the floor, the shelves, the phials, the mechanical inventions, and then rested full on my cylinder fixed to the table. He approached, examined it curiously, asked what it was? I explained. To gratify him, I sat down and renewed my experiment, with equally ill success. The needle, which should have moved from west to south, describing an angle of from 30 deg. to 40 or even 50 deg., only made a few troubled, undecided oscillations.

"Tut," cried the young man, "I see what it is; you have a wound in your right hand."

That was true. I had burnt my hand a few days before in a chemical experiment, and the sore had not healed.

"Well," said I, "and what does that matter?"

"Everything; the least scratch in the skin of the hand produces chemical actions on the electric current, independently of your will. Let me try."

He took my place, and in a moment the needle in the galvanometer responded to his grasp on the cylinder, exactly as the inventive philosopher had stated to be the due result of the experiment.

I was startled.

"But how came you, Mr. Margrave, to be so well acquainted with a scientific process little known, and but recently discovered?"

"I well acquainted! Not so. But I am fond of all experiments that relate to animal life. Electricity, especially, is full of interest."

On that I drew him out (as I thought), and he talked volubly. I was amazed to find this young man, in whose brain I had conceived thought kept one careless holiday, was evidently familiar with the physical sciences, and especially with chemistry, which was my own study by predilection. But never had I met with a student in whom a knowledge so extensive was mixed up with notions so obsolete or so crotchety. In one sentence he showed that he had mastered some late discovery by Faraday or Liebig; in the next sentence he was talking the wild fallacies of Cardan or Van Helmont. I burst out laughing at some paradox about sympathetic powders, which he enounced as if it were a recognized truth.

"Pray tell me," said I, "who was your master in physics, for a cleverer pupil never had a more crack-brained teacher."

"No," he answered, with his merry laugh, "it is not the teacher's fault. I am a mere parrot; just cry out a few scraps of learning picked up here and there. But, however, I am fond of all researches into Nature; all guesses at her riddles. To tell you the truth, one reason why I have taken to you so heartily is not only that your published work caught my fancy in the dip which I took into its contents (pardon me if I say dip, I never do more than dip into any book), but also because young —— tells me that which all whom I have met in the town confirm; viz., that you are one of those few practical chemists who are at once exceedingly cautious and exceedingly bold; willing to try every new experiment, but submitting experiment to rigid tests. Well, I have an experiment running wild in this giddy head of mine, and I want you, some day when at leisure, to catch it, fix it as you have fixed that cylinder: make something of it. I am sure you can."

"What is it?"

"Something akin to the theories in your work. You would replenish or preserve to each special constitution the special substance that may fail to the equilibrium of its health. But you own that in a large proportion of cases the best cure of disease is less to deal with the disease itself than to support and stimulate the whole system, so as to enable Nature to cure the disease and restore the impaired equilibrium by her own agencies. Thus, if you find that in certain cases of nervous debility a substance like nitric acid is efficacious, it is because the nitric acid has a virtue in locking up, as it were, the nervous energy—that is, preventing all undue waste. Again, in some cases of what is commonly called feverish cold, stimulants like ammonia assist Nature itself to get rid of the disorder that oppresses its normal action; and, on the same principle, I apprehend, it is contended that a large average of human lives is saved in those hospitals which have adopted the supporting system of ample nourishment and alcoholic stimulants."

"Your medical learning surprises me," said I, smiling, "and without pausing to notice where it deals somewhat superficially with disputable points in general, and my own theory in particular, I ask you for the deduction you draw from your premises."

"It is simply this: that to all animate bodies, however various, there must be one principle in common, the vital principle itself. What if there be one certain means of recruiting that principle? And what if that secret can be discovered?"

"Pshaw! The old illusion of the mediæval empirics."

"Not so. But the mediæval empirics were great discoverers. You sneer at Van Helmont, who sought, in water, the principle of all things; but Van Helmont discovered in his search those invisible bodies called gases. Now the principle of life must be certainly ascribed to a gas.* And whatever is a gas, chemistry should not despair of producing! But I can argue no longer now—never can argue long at a stretch—we are wasting the morning; and joy! the sun is up! See! Out! Come out! Out! and greet the great Life-giver face to face."

I could not resist the young man's invitation. In a few minutes we were in the quiet lane under the glinting chestnut-trees. Margrave was chanting low, a wild tune—words in a strange language.

"What words are those? No European language, I think; for I know a little of most of the languages which are spoken in our quarter of the globe, at least by its more civilized races."

"Civilized race! What is civilization? Those words were uttered by men who founded empires when Europe itself was not civilized! Hush, is it not a grand old air?" and lifting his eyes towards the sun, he gave vent to a voice clear and deep as a mighty bell! The air was grand; the words had a sonorous swell that suited it, and they seemed to me jubilant and yet solemn. He stopped abruptly, as a path from the lane had led us into the fields, already half-bathed in sunlight—dews glittering on the hedgerows.

*"According to the views we have mentioned, we must ascribe life to a gas; that is, to an aeriform body."—Liebig, "Organic Chemistry." Playfair's translation, p. 363. It is perhaps not less superfluous to add that Liebig does not support the views "according to which life must be ascribed to a gas," than it would be to state had Dugald Stewart been quoted as writing, "According to the views we have mentioned the mind is but a bundle of impressions," that Dugald Stewart was not supporting, but opposing, the views of David Hume. The quotation is merely meant to show, in the shortest possible compass, that there are views entertained by speculative reasoners of our day which, according to Liebig, would lead to the inference at which Margrave so boldly arrives. Margrave is, however, no doubt, led to his belief by his reminiscences of Van Helmont, to whose discovery of gas he is referring. Van Helmont plainly affirms "that the arterial spirit of our life is of the nature of a gas"; and in the same chapter (on the fiction of elementary complexions and mixtures) says, "Seeing that the spirit of our life, since it is a gas, is most mightily and swiftly affected by any other gas," etc. He repeats the same dogma in his treatise on Long Life, and indeed very generally throughout his writings, observing, in his Chapter on "Vital Air," that the spirit of life is a salt sharp vapor, made of the arterial blood, etc. Liebig, therefore, in confuting some modern notions as to the nature of contagion by miasma, is leading their reasonings back to that assumption in the dawn of physiological science by which the discoverer of gas exalted into the principle of life the substance to which he first gave the name now so familiarly known. It is nevertheless just to Van Helmont to add that his conception of the vital principle was very far from being as purely materialistic as it would seem to those unacquainted with his writings; for he carefully distinguishes that principle of life which he ascribes to a gas, and by which he means the sensuous animal life, from the intellectual immortal principle of soul. Van Helmont, indeed, was a sincere believer in Divine Revelation. "The Lord Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life," says with earnest humility this daring genius, in that noble Chapter "on the completing of the mind by the 'prayer of silence,' and the loving offering up of the heart, soul, and strength to the obedience of the Divine will," from which some of the most eloquent of recent philosophers, arguing against materialism, have borrowed largely in support and in ornament of their lofty cause.

"Your song," said I, "would go well with the clash of cymbals or the peal of the organ. I am no judge of melody, but this strikes me as that of a religious hymn."

"I compliment you on the guess. It is a Persian fire-worshipper's hymn to the sun. The dialect is very different from modern Persian. Cyrus the Great might have chanted it on his march upon Babylon."

"And where did you learn it?"

"In Persia itself."

"You have travelled much—learned much—and are so young and so fresh. Is it an impertinent question if I ask whether your parents are yet living, or are you wholly lord of yourself?"

"Thank you for the question; pray make my answer known in the town. Parents I have not—never had."

"Never had parents!"

"Well, I ought rather to say that no parents ever owned me. I am a natural son—a vagabond—a nobody. When I came of age I received an anonymous letter, informing me that a sum—I need not say what—but more than enough for all I need, was lodged at an English banker's in my name; that my mother had died in my infancy; that my father was also dead—but recently; that as I was a child of love, and he was unwilling that the secret of my birth should ever be traced, he had provided for me, not by will, but in his life, by a sum consigned to the trust of the friend who now wrote to me; I need give myself no trouble to learn more; faith, I never did. I am young, healthy, rich—yes, rich! Now you know all, and you had better tell it, that I may win no man's courtesy and no maiden's love upon false pretences. I have not even a right, you see, to the name I bear. 'Hist! Let me catch that squirrel."

With what a panther-like bound he sprang! The squirrel eluded his grasp, and was up the oak-tree; in a moment he was up the oak-tree too. In amazement I saw him rising from bough to bough; saw his bright eyes and glittering teeth through the green leaves; presently I heard the sharp piteous cry of the squirrel, echoed by the youth's merry laugh,—and down, through that maze of green Margrave came, dropping on the grass and bounding up, as Mercury might have bounded with his wings at his heels.

"I have caught him—what pretty brown eyes!"

Suddenly the gay expression of his face changed to that of a savage; the squirrel had wrenched itself half-loose and bitten

him. The poor brute! In an instant its neck was wrung, its body dashed on the ground; and that fair young creature, every feature quivering with rage, was stamping his foot on his victim again and again! It was horrible. I caught him by the arm indignantly. He turned round on me like a wild beast disturbed from its prey. His teeth set, his hand lifted, his eyes like balls of fire.

"Shame!" said I calmly; "Shame on you!"

He continued to gaze on me a moment or so; his eye glaring, his breath panting; and then, as if mastering himself with an involuntary effort, his arm dropped to his side, and he said quite humbly: "I beg your pardon; indeed I do. I was beside myself for a moment; I cannot bear pain"; and he looked in deep compassion for himself at his wounded hand. "Venomous brute!" And he stamped again on the body of the squirrel, already crushed out of shape.

I moved away in disgust, and walked on.

But presently I felt my arm softly drawn aside, and a voice, dulcet as the coo of a dove, stole its way into my ears. There was no resisting the charm with which this extraordinary mortal could fascinate even the hard and the cold; nor them, perhaps, the least. For as you see in extreme old age, when the heart seems to have shrunk into itself, and to leave but meagre and nipped affections for the nearest relations if grown up, the indurated egotism softens at once towards a playful child; or as you see in middle life, some misanthrope, whose nature has been soured by wrong and sorrow, shrink from his own species, yet make friends with inferior races and respond to the caress of a dog, so, for the worldling or the cynic, there was an attraction in the freshness of this joyous favorite of Nature; an attraction like that of a beautiful child, spoilt and wayward, or of a graceful animal, half-docile, half-fierce.

"But," said I, with a smile, as I felt all displeasure gone, "such indulgence of passion for such a trifle is surely unworthy a student of philosophy!"

"Trifle," he said dolorously. "But I tell you it is pain; pain is no trifle. I suffer. Look!"

I looked at the hand, which I took in mine. The bite no doubt had been sharp; but the hand that lay in my own was that which the Greek sculptor gives to a gladiator; not large (the extremities are never large in persons whose strength comes from the just proportion of all the members, rather than the factitious and partial force which continued muscular exertion will give to one part of the frame, to the comparative weak-

ening of the rest), but with the firm-knit joints, the solid fingers, the finished nails, the massive palm, the supple polished skin, in which we recognize what Nature designs the human hand to be—the skilled, swift, mighty doer of all those marvels which win Nature herself from the wilderness.

"It is strange," said I thoughtfully "but your susceptibility to suffering confirms my opinion, which is different from the popular belief, viz., that pain is most acutely felt by those in whom the animal organization being perfect, and the sense of vitality exquisitely keen, every injury or lesion finds the whole system rise, as it were, to repel the mischief and communicate the consciousness of it to all those nerves which are the sentinels to the garrison of life. Yet my theory is scarcely borne out by general fact. The Indian savages must have a health as perfect as yours; a nervous system as fine. Witness their marvellous accuracy of ear, of eye, of scent, probably also of touch, yet they are indifferent to physical pain; or must I mortify your pride by saying that they have some moral quality defective in you which enables them to rise superior to it?"

"The Indian savages," said Margrave sullenly, "have not a health as perfect as mine, and in what you call vitality—the blissful consciousness of life—they are as sticks and stones compared to me."

"How do you know?"

"Because I have lived with them. It is a fallacy to suppose that the savage has a health superior to that of the civilized man,—if the civilized man be but temperate; and even if not, he has the stamina that can resist for years the effect of excess which would destroy the savage in a month. As to the savage's fine perceptions of sense, such do not come from exquisite equilibrium of system, but are hereditary attributes transmitted from race to race, and strengthened by training from infancy. But is a pointer stronger and healthier than a mastiff, because the pointer through long and early teaching creeps stealthily to his game and stands to it motionless? I will talk of this later; now I suffer! Pain! pain! Has life any ill but pain?"

It so happened that I had about me some roots of the white lily, which I meant, before returning home, to leave with a patient suffering from one of those acute local inflammations, in which that simple remedy often affords great relief. I cut up one of these roots, and bound the cooling leaves to the wounded hand with my handkerchief.

"There," said I. "Fortunately, if you feel pain more sensibly than others, you will recover from it more quickly."

And in a few minutes my companion felt perfectly relieved, and poured out his gratitude with an extravagance of expression and a beaming delight of countenance which positively touched me.

"I almost feel," said I, "as I do when I have stilled an infant's wailing, and restored it smiling to its mother's breast."

"You have done so. I am an infant, and Nature is my mother. Oh, to be restored to the full joy of life, the scent of wild flowers, the song of birds, and this air—summer air—summer air!"

I know not why it was, but at that moment, looking at him and hearing him, I rejoiced that Lilian was not at L——.

"But I came out to bathe. Can we not bathe in that stream?"

"No. You would derange the bandage round your hand: and for all bodily ills, from the least to the gravest, there is nothing like leaving Nature at rest the moment we have hit on the means which assist her own efforts at cure."

"I obey, then; but I so love the water."

"You swim, of course?"

"Ask the fish if it swim. Ask the fish if it can escape me! I delight to dive down—down; to plunge after the startled trout, as an otter does; and then to get amongst those cool, fragrant reeds and bulrushes, or that forest of emerald weed which one sometimes finds waving under clear rivers. Man! man! could you live but an hour of my life you would know how horrible a thing it is to die!"

"Yet the dying do not think so; they pass away calm and smiling as you will one day."

"I—I! Die one day—die!" and he sank on the grass, and buried his face amongst the herbage, sobbing aloud.

Before I could get through half a dozen words, meant to soothe, he had once more bounded up, dashed the tears from his eyes, and was again singing some wild, barbaric chant. Abstracting itself from the appeal to its outward sense by melodies of which the language was unknown, my mind soon grew absorbed in meditative conjectures on the singular nature, so wayward, so impulsive, which had forced intimacy on a man grave and practical as myself.

I was puzzled how to reconcile so passionate a childishness, so undisciplined a want of self-control, with an experience of mankind so extended by travel, with an education, desultory and irregular indeed, but which must, at some time or other, have been familiarized to severe reasonings and laborious

studies. In Margrave there seemed to be wanting that mysterious something which is needed to keep our faculties, however severally brilliant, harmoniously linked together—as the string by which a child mechanically binds the wild flowers it gathers; shaping them at choice into the garland or the chain.

CHAPTER XXV.

My intercourse with Margrave grew habitual and familiar. He came to my house every morning before sunrise; in the evenings we were again brought together: sometimes in the houses to which we were both invited, sometimes at his hotel, sometimes in my own home.

Nothing more perplexed me than his aspect of extreme youthfulness, contrasted with the extent of the travels, which, if he were to be believed, had left little of the known world unexplored. One day I asked him, bluntly, how old he was?

"How old do I look? How old should you suppose me to be?"

"I should have guessed you to be about twenty, till you spoke of having come of age some years ago."

"Is it a sign of longevity when a man looks much younger than he is?"

"Conjoined with other signs, certainly!"

"Have I the other signs?"

"Yes, a magnificent, perhaps a matchless, constitutional organization. But you have evaded my question as to your age; was it an impertinence to put it?"

"No. I came of age—let me see—three years ago."

"So long since? Is it possible? I wish I had your secret!"

"Secret! What secret?"

"The secret of preserving so much of boyish freshness in the wear and tear of man-like passions and man-like thoughts."

"You are still young yourself—under forty?"

"Oh, yes! Some years under forty."

"And Nature gave you a grander frame and a finer symmetry of feature than she bestowed on me."

"Pooh! Pooh! You have the beauty that must charm the eyes of woman, and that beauty in its sunny forenoon of youth. Happy man! if you love—and wish to be sure that you are loved again."

"What you call love—the unhealthy sentiment, the feverish folly—I left behind me, I think forever, when—"

"Ay, indeed—when?"

"I came of age!"

"Hoary cynic! and you despise love! So did I once. Your time may come."

"I think not. Does any animal, except man, love its fellow she-animal as man loves woman?"

"As man loves woman? No, I suppose not."

"And why should the subject animals be wiser than their king! But, to return—you would like to have my youth and my careless enjoyment of youth?"

"Can you ask—who would not?" Margrave looked at me for a moment with unusual seriousness, and then, in the abrupt changes common to his capricious temperament, began to sing softly one of his barbaric chants—a chant, different from any I had heard him sing before; made either by the modulation of his voice or the nature of the tune, so sweet that, little as music generally affected me, this thrilled to my very heart's core. I drew closer and closer to him, and murmured when he paused:

"Is not that a love-song?"

"No," said he, "it is the song by which the serpent-charmer charms the serpent."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Increased intimacy with my new acquaintance did not diminish the charm of his society, though it brought to light some startling defects, both in his mental and moral organization. I have before said that his knowledge, though it had swept over a wide circuit and dipped into curious, unfrequented recesses, was desultory and erratic. It certainly was not that knowledge, sustained and aspiring, which the poet assures us is "the wing on which we mount to heaven." So, in his faculties themselves there were singular inequalities, or contradictions. His power of memory in some things seemed prodigious, but when examined it was seldom accurate; it could apprehend but did not hold together with a binding grasp what metaphysicians call "complex ideas." He thus seemed unable to put it to any steadfast purpose in the sciences of which it retained, vaguely and loosely, many recondite principles. For the sublime and beautiful in literature he had no taste whatever. A passionate lover of nature, his imagination had no response to the arts by which nature is expressed or idealized; wholly unaf-

fected by poetry or painting. Of the fine arts, music alone attracted and pleased him. His conversation was often eminently suggestive, touching on much, whether in books or mankind, that set one thinking, but I never remember him to have uttered any of those lofty or tender sentiments which form the connecting lines between youth and genius. For if poets sing to the young, and the young hail their own interpreters in poets, it is because the tendency of both is to idealize the realities of life; finding everywhere in the Real a something that is noble or fair, and making the fair yet fairer, and the noble nobler still.

In Margrave's character there seemed no special vices, no special virtues; but a wonderful vivacity, joyousness, animal good humor. He was singularly temperate, having a dislike to wine, perhaps from that purity of taste which belongs to health absolutely perfect. No healthful child likes alcohols, no animal, except man, prefers wine to water.

But his main moral defect seemed to me in a want of sympathy, even where he professed attachment. He who could feel so acutely for himself, be unmanned by the bite of a squirrel, and sob at the thought that he should one day die, was as callous to the sufferings of another as a deer who deserts and butts from him a wounded comrade.

I give an instance of this hardness of heart where I should have least expected to find it in him.

He had met and joined me as I was walking to visit a patient on the outskirts of the town, when we fell in with a group of children, just let loose for an hour or two from their day-school. Some of these children joyously recognized him as having played with them at their homes; they ran up to him, and he seemed as glad as themselves at the meeting.

He suffered them to drag him along with them, and became as merry and sportive as the youngest of the troup.

"Well," said I, laughing, "if you are going to play at leap-frog, pray don't let it be on the high road, or you will be run over by carts and draymen; see that meadow just in front to the left—off with you there!"

"With all my heart," cried Margrave, "while you pay your visit. Come along, boys."

A little urchin, not above six years old, but who was lame, began to cry, he could not run—he should be left behind.

Margrave stooped. "Climb on my shoulder, little one, and I'll be your horse."

The child dried its tears, and delightedly obeyed.

"Certainly," said I to myself, "Margrave, after all, must have a nature as gentle as it is simple. What other young man, so courted by all the allurements that steal innocence from pleasure, would stop in the thoroughfares to play with children?"

The thought had scarcely passed through my mind when I heard a scream of agony. Margrave had leaped the railing that divided the meadow from the road, and, in so doing, the poor child, perched on his shoulder, had, perhaps from surprise or fright, loosened its hold and fallen heavily—its cries were piteous. Margrave clapped his hands to his ears: uttered an exclamation of anger; and not even stopping to lift up the boy, to examine what the hurt was, called to the other children to come on, and was soon rolling with them on the grass, and pelting them with daisies. When I came up, only one child remained by the sufferer—his little brother, a year older than himself. The child had fallen on his arm, which was not broken, but violently contused. The pain must have been intense. I carried the child to his home, and had to remain there some time. I did not see Margrave till the next morning. When he then called, I felt so indignant that I could scarcely speak to him. When at last I rebuked him for his inhumanity, he seemed surprised; with difficulty remembered the circumstance, and then merely said, as if it were the most natural confession in the world:

"Oh, nothing so discordant as a child's wail. I hate discords. I am pleased with the company of children; but they must be children who laugh and play. Well, why do you look at me so sternly? What have I said to shock you?"

"Shock me—you shock manhood itself! Go! I cannot talk to you now. I am busy."

But he did not go; and his voice was so sweet, and his ways so winning, that disgust insensibly melted into that sort of forgiveness one accords (let me repeat the illustration) to the deer that forsakes its comrade. The poor thing knows no better. And what a graceful, beautiful thing *this* was!

The fascination—I can give it no other name—which Margrave exercised was not confined to me, it was universal; old, young, high, low, man, woman, child, all felt it. Never in Low Town had stranger, even the most distinguished by fame, met with a reception so cordial, so flattering. His frank confession that he was a natural son, far from being to his injury, served to interest people more in him, and to prevent all those inquiries in regard to his connections and antecedents which would otherwise have been afloat. To be sure, he was evident-

ly rich; at least he had plenty of money. He lived in the best rooms in the principal hotel; was very hospitable; entertained the families with whom he had grown intimate; made them bring their children—music and dancing after dinner. Among the houses in which he had established familiar acquaintance was that of the mayor of the town, who had bought Dr. Lloyd's collection of subjects in natural history. To that collection the mayor had added largely by a very recent purchase. He had arranged these various specimens, which his last acquisitions had enriched by the interesting carcasses of an elephant and a hippopotamus, in a large wooden building contiguous to his dwelling, which had been constructed by a former proprietor (a retired fox-hunter) as a riding-house. And being a man who much affected the diffusion of knowledge, he proposed to open this museum to the admiration of the general public, and, at his death, to bequeath it to the Athenæum or Literary Institute of his native town. Margrave, seconded by the influence of the mayor's daughters, had scarcely been three days at L—— before he had persuaded this excellent and public functionary to inagurate the opening of his museum by the popular ceremony of a ball. A temporary corridor should unite the drawing-rooms, which were on the ground floor, with the building that contained the collection; and thus the *fête* would be elevated above the frivolous character of a fashionable amusement, and consecrated to the solemnization of an intellectual institute. Dazzled by the brilliancy of this idea, the mayor announced his intention to give a ball that should include the surrounding neighborhood, and be worthy, in all expensive respects, of the dignity of himself and the occasion. A night had been fixed for the ball—a night that became memorable indeed to me! The entertainment was anticipated with a lively interest, in which even the Hill condescended to share. The Hill did not much patronize mayors in general; but when a mayor gave a ball for a purpose so patriotic, and on a scale so splendid, the Hill liberally acknowledged that Commerce was, on the whole, a thing which the Eminence might, now and then, condescend to acknowledge without absolutely derogating from the rank which Providence had assigned to it amongst the High Places of earth. Accordingly, the Hill was permitted by its Queen to honor the first magistrate of Low Town by a promise to attend his ball. Now, as this festivity had originated in the suggestion of Margravé, so, by a natural association of ideas, every one, in talking of the ball, talked also of Margrave.

The Hill had at first affected to ignore a stranger whose *début* had been made in the mercantile circle of Low Town. But the Queen of the Hill now said, sententiously: "This new man in a few days has become a Celebrity. It is the policy of the Hill to adopt Celebrities, if the Celebrities pay respect to the Proprieties. Dr. Fenwick is requested to procure Mr. Margrave the advantage of being known to the Hill."

I found it somewhat difficult to persuade Margrave to accept the Hill's condescending overture. He seemed to have a dislike to all societies pretending to aristocratic distinction—a dislike expressed with a fierceness so unwonted that it made one suppose he had, at some time or other, been subjected to mortification by the supercilious airs that blow upon heights so elevated. However, he yielded to my instances, and accompanied me one evening to Mrs. Poyntz's house. The Hill was encamped there for the occasion. Mrs. Poyntz was exceedingly civil to him, and after a few commonplace speeches, hearing that he was fond of music, consigned him to the caressing care of Miss Brabazon, who was at the head of the musical department in the Queen of the Hill's administration.

Mrs. Poyntz retired to her favorite seat near the window, inviting me to sit beside her; and while she knitted in silence, in silence my eye glanced towards Margrave in the midst of the group assembled round the piano.

Whether he was in more than usually high spirits, or whether he was actuated by a malign and impish desire to upset the established laws of decorum by which the gayeties of the Hill were habitually subdued into a serene and somewhat pensive pleasantness, I know not; but it was not many minutes before the orderly aspect of the place was grotesquely changed.

Miss Brabazon having come to the close of a complicated and dreary sonata, I heard Margrave abruptly ask her if she could play the Tarantella, that famous Neapolitan air which is founded on the legendary belief that the bite of the tarantula excites an irresistible desire to dance. On that highbred spinster's confession that she was ignorant of the air, and had not even heard of the legend, Margrave said, "Let me play it to you, with variations of my own." Miss Brabazon graciously yielded her place at the instrument, Margrave seated himself; there was great curiosity to hear his performance. Margrave's fingers rushed over the keys, and there was a general start, the prelude was so unlike any known combination of harmonious sounds. Then he began a chant—song I can scarcely call it—words certainly not in Italian, perhaps in some

uncivilized tongue, perhaps an impromptu gibberish. And the torture of the instrument now commenced in good earnest: it shrieked, it groaned, wilder and noisier. Beethoven's Storm, roused by the fell touch of a German pianist, were mild in comparison; and the mighty voice, dominating the anguish of the cracking keys, had the full diapason of a chorus. Certainly I am no judge of music, but to my ear the discord was terrific; to the ears of better informed amateurs it seemed ravishing. All were spellbound; even Mrs. Poyntz paused from her knitting, as the Fates paused from their web at the lyre of Orpheus. To this breathless delight, however, soon succeeded a general desire for movement. To my amazement, I beheld these formal matrons and sober fathers of families forming themselves into a dance, turbulent as a children's ball at Christmas. And when, suddenly desisting from his music, Margrave started up, caught the skeleton hand of lean Miss Brabazon, and whirled her into the centre of the dance, I could have fancied myself at a witches' sabbat. My eye turned in scandalized alarm to Mrs. Poyntz. That great creature seemed as much astounded as myself. Her eyes were fixed on the scene in a stare of positive stupor. For the first time, no doubt, in her life, she was overcome, deposed, dethroned. The awe of her presence was literally whirled away. The dance ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Darting from the galvanized mummy whom he had selected as his partner, Margrave shot to Mrs. Poyntz's side, and said: "Ten thousand pardons for quitting you so soon, but the clock warns me that I have an engagement elsewhere." In another moment he was gone.

The dance halted, people seemed slowly returning to their senses, looking at each other bashfully and ashamed.

"I could not help it, dear," sighed Miss Brabazon at last, sinking into a chair, and casting her deprecating, fainting eyes upon the hostess.

"It is witchcraft," said fat Mrs. Bruce, wiping her forehead.

"Witchcraft!" echoed Mrs. Poyntz; "it does indeed look like it. An amazing and portentous exhibition of animal spirits, and not to be endured by the Proprieties. Where on earth can that young savage have come from?"

"From savage lands," said I. "So he says."

"Do not bring him here again," said Mrs. Poyntz. "He would soon turn the Hill topsy-turvy. But how charming! I should like to see more of him," she added, in an under voice, "if he would call on me some morning, and not in the pres-

ence of those for whose Proprieties I am responsible. Jane must be out in her ride with the Colonel."

Margrave never again attended the patrician festivities of the Hill. Invitations were poured upon him, especially by Miss Brabazon and other old maids, but in vain.

"Those people," said he, "are too tamed and civilized for me; and so few young persons among them. Even that girl Jane is only young on the surface; inside, as old as the World or her mother. I like youth, real youth—I am young, I am young!"

And indeed, I observed he would attach himself to some young person, often to some child, as if with cordial and special favor, yet, for not more than an hour or so, never distinguishing them by the same preference when he next met them. I made that remark to him, in rebuke of his fickleness, one evening when he found me at work on my Ambitious Book, reducing to rule and measure the Laws of Nature.

"It is not fickleness," said he, "it is necessity."

"Necessity! Explain yourself."

"I seek to find what I have not found," said he; "it is my necessity to seek it, and among the young; and disappointed in one, I turn to the other. Necessity again. But find it at last I must."

"I suppose you mean what the young usually seek in the young; and if, as you said the other day, you have left love behind you, you now wander back to re-find it."

"Tush! If I may judge by the talk of young fools, love may be found every day by him who looks out for it. What I seek is among the rarest of all discoveries. You might aid me to find it, and in so doing aid yourself to a knowledge far beyond all that your former experiments can bestow."

"Prove your words, and command my services," said I, smiling somewhat disdainfully.

"You told me that you had examined into the alleged phenomena of animal magnetism, and proved some persons who pretend to the gift which the Scotch call second sight to be bungling impostors. You were right. I have seen the clairvoyants who drive their trade in this town; a common gypsy could beat them in their own calling. But your experience must have shown you that there are certain temperaments in which the gift of the Pythoness is stored, unknown to the possessor, undetected by the common observer; but the signs of which should be as apparent to the modern physiologist as they were to the ancient priest."

"I at least, as a physiologist, am ignorant of the signs—what are they?"

"I should despair of making you comprehend them by mere verbal description. I could guide your observation to distinguish them unerringly were living subjects before us. But not one in a million has the gift to an extent available for the purposes to which the wise would apply it. Many have imperfect glimpses, few, few indeed, the unveiled, lucent sight. They who have but the imperfect glimpses mislead and dupe the minds that consult them, because, being sometimes marvellously right, they excite a credulous belief in their general accuracy; and as they are but translators of dreams in their own brain, their assurances are no more to be trusted than are the dreams of commonplace sleepers. But where the gift exists to perfection, he who knows how to direct and to profit by it should be able to discover all that he desires to know for the guidance and preservation of his own life. He will be forewarned of every danger, forearmed in the means by which danger is avoided. For the eye of the true Pythoness matter has no obstruction, space no confines, time no measurement."

"My dear Margrave, you may well say that creatures so gifted are rare; and, for my part, I would as soon search for a unicorn, as, to use your affected expression, for a Pythoness."

"Nevertheless, whenever there come across the course of your practice some young creature to whom all the evil of the world is as yet unknown, to whom the ordinary cares and duties of the world are strange and unwelcome; who from the earliest dawn of reason has loved to sit apart and to muse; before whose eyes visions pass unsolicited; who converses with those who are not dwellers on the earth, and beholds in the space landscapes which the earth does not reflect—"

"Margrave, Margrave! Of whom do you speak?"

"Whose frame, though exquisitely sensitive, has still a health and a soundness in which you recognize no disease; whose mind has a truthfulness that you know cannot deceive you, and a simple intelligence too clear to deceive itself; who is moved to a mysterious degree by all the varying aspects of external nature—innocently joyous, or unaccountably sad—when, I say, such a being comes across your experience, inform me; and the chances are that the true Pythoness is found."

I had listened with vague terror, and with more than one exclamation of amazement, to descriptions which brought Lilian Ashleigh before me; and I now sat mute, bewildered,

breathless, gazing upon Margrave, and rejoicing that, at least, Lilian he had never seen.

He returned my own gaze steadily, searchingly, and then, breaking into a slight laugh, resumed:

"You call my word 'Pythoness' affected. I know of no better. My recollections of classic anecdote and history are confused and dim; but somewhere I have read or heard that the priests of Delphi were accustomed to travel chiefly into Thrace or Thessaly, in search of the virgins who might fitly administer their oracles, and that the oracles gradually ceased in repute as the priests became unable to discover the organization requisite in the priestesses, and supplied by craft and imposture, or by such imperfect fragmentary developments as belong now to professional clairvoyants, the gifts which Nature failed to afford. Indeed, the demand was one that must have rapidly exhausted so limited a supply. The constant strain upon faculties so wearing to the vital functions in their relentless exercise, under the artful stimulants by which the priests heightened their power, was mortal, and no Pythoness ever retained her life more than three years from the time that her gift was elaborately trained and developed."

"Pooh! I know of no classical authority for the details you so confidently cite. Perhaps some such legends may be found in the Alexandrian Platonists, but those mystics are no authority on such a subject. After all," I added, recovering from my first surprise, or awe, "the Delphic oracles were proverbially ambiguous, and their responses might be read either way; a proof that the priests dictated the verses, though their arts on the unhappy priestess might throw her into real convulsions, and the real convulsions, not the false gift, might shorten her life. Enough of such idle subjects! Yet no! One question more. If you found your Pythoness, what then?"

"What then? Why, through her aid I might discover the process of an experiment which your practical science would assist me to complete."

"Tell me of what kind is your experiment; and precisely because such little science as I possess is exclusively practical, I may assist you without the help of the Pythoness."

Margrave was silent for some minutes, passing his hand several times across his forehead, which was a frequent gesture of his, and then rising, he answered, in listless accents:

"I cannot say more now, my brain is fatigued; and you are not yet in the right mood to hear me. By the way, how close and reserved you are with me!"

"How so?"

"You never told me that you were engaged to be married. You leave me, who thought to have won your friendship, to hear what concerns you intimately from a comparative stranger."

"Who told you?"

"That woman with eyes that pry and lips that scheme, to whose house you took me."

"Mrs. Poyntz! Is it possible? When?'

"This afternoon. I met her in the street; she stopped me, and, after some unmeaning talk, asked 'if I had seen you lately; if I did not find you very absent and distracted: no wonder—you were in love. The young lady was away on a visit, and wooed by a dangerous rival.' "

"Wooed by a dangerous rival!"

"Very rich, good-looking, young. Do you fear him? You turn pale."

"I do not fear, except so far as he who loves truly, loves humbly, and fears not that another may be preferred, but that another may be worthier of preference than himself. But that Mrs. Poyntz should tell you all this does amaze me. Did she mention the name of the young lady?"

"Yes; Lilian Ashleigh. Henceforth be more frank with me. Who knows?—I may help you. Adieu!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Margrave had gone, I glanced at the clock—not yet nine. I resolved to go at once to Mrs. Poyntz. It was not an evening on which she received, but doubtless she would see me. She owed me an explanation. How thus carelessly divulge a secret she had been enjoined to keep? And this rival, of whom I was ignorant? It was no longer a matter of wonder that Margrave should have described Lilian's peculiar idiosyncrasies in his sketch of his fabulous Pythoness. Doubtless, Mrs. Poyntz had, with unpardonable levity of indiscretion, revealed all of which she disapproved in my choice. But for what object? Was this her boasted friendship for me? Was it consistent with the regard she professed for Mrs. Ashleigh and Lilian? Occupied by these perplexed and indignant thoughts, I arrived at Mrs. Poyntz's house, and was admitted to her presence. She was fortunately alone; her daughter and the Colonel had gone to some party on the Hill. I would not take the hand she held out to me on entrance; seated myself

in stern displeasure, and proceeded at once to inquire if she had really betrayed to Mr. Margrave the secret of my engagement to Lilian.

"Yes, Allen Fenwick; I have this day told, not only Mr. Margrave, but every person I met who is likely to tell it to some one else, the secret of your engagement to Lilian Ashleigh. I never promised to conceal it; on the contrary, I wrote word to Anne Ashleigh that I would therein act as my own judgment counselled me. I think my words to you were that 'public gossip was sometimes the best security for the completion of private engagements.'"

"Do you mean that Mrs. or Miss Ashleigh recoils from the engagement with me, and that I should meanly compel them both to fulfil it by calling in the public to censure them—if—if—Oh, madam, this is worldly artifice indeed!"

"Be good enough to listen to me quietly. I have never yet showed you the letter to Mrs. Ashleigh, written by Lady Haughton, and delivered by Mr. Vigors. That letter I will now show to you; but before doing so I must enter into a preliminary explanation. Lady Haughton is one of those women who love power, and cannot obtain it except through wealth and station—by her own intellect never obtain it. When her husband died she was reduced from an income of twelve thousand a year to a jointure of twelve hundred, but with the exclusive guardianship of a young son, a minor, and adequate allowances for the charge; she continued, therefore, to preside as mistress over the establishments in town and country; still had the administration of her son's wealth and rank. She stinted his education, in order to maintain her ascendency over him. He became a brainless prodigal—spendthrift alike of health and fortune. Alarmed, she saw that, probably, he would die young and a beggar; his only hope of reform was in marriage. She reluctantly resolved to marry him to a penniless, well-born, soft-minded young lady whom she knew she could control; just before this marriage was to take place he was killed by a fall from his horse. The Haughton estate passed to his cousin, the luckiest young man alive; the same Ashleigh Sumner who had already succeeded, in default of male issue, to poor Gilbert Ashleigh's landed possessions. Over this young man Lady Haughton could expect no influence. She would be a stranger in his house. But she had a niece! Mr. Vigors assured her the niece was beautiful. And if the niece could become Mrs. Ashleigh Sumner, then Lady Haughton would be a less unimportant Nobody in the world,

because she would still have her nearest relation in a Somebody at Haughton Park. Mr. Vigors had his own pompous reasons for approving an alliance which he might help to accomplish. The first step towards that alliance was obviously to bring into reciprocal attraction the natural charms of the young lady and the acquired merits of the young gentleman. Mr. Vigors could easily induce his ward to pay a visit to Lady Haughton, and Lady Haughton had only to extend her invitations to her niece; hence the letter to Mrs. Ashleigh, of which Mr. Vigors was the bearer, and hence my advice to you, of which you can now understand the motive. Since you thought Lilian Ashleigh the only woman you could love, and since I thought there were other women in the world who might do as well for Ashleigh Sumner, it seemed to me fair for all parties that Lilian should not go to Lady Haughton's in ignorance of the sentiments with which she had inspired you. A girl can seldom be sure that she loves until she is sure that she is loved. And now," added Mrs. Poyntz, rising and walking across the room to her bureau—"now I will show you Lady Haughton's invitation to Mrs. Ashleigh. Here it is!"

I ran my eye over the letter, which she thrust into my hand, resuming her knitwork while I read.

The letter was short, couched in conventional terms of hollow affection. The writer blamed herself for having so long neglected her brother's widow and child; her heart had been wrapped up too much in the son she had lost; that loss had made her turn to the ties of blood still left to her; she had heard much of Lilian from their common friend, Mr. Vigors; she longed to embrace so charming a niece. Then followed the invitation and the postscript. The postscript ran thus, so far as I can remember: "Whatever my own grief at my irreparable bereavement, I am no egotist, I keep my sorrow to myself. You will find some pleasant guests at my house, among others our joint connection, young Ashleigh Sumner."

"Women's postscripts are proverbial for their significance," said Mrs. Poyntz, when I had concluded the letter and laid it on the table; "and if I did not at once show you this hypocritical effusion, it was simply because at the name Ashleigh Sumner its object became transparent, not perhaps to poor Anne Ashleigh nor to innocent Lilian, but to my knowledge of the parties concerned, as it ought to be to that shrewd intelligence which you derive partly from nature, partly from the insight into life which a true physician cannot fail to acquire. And if I know anything of you, you would have romantically

said, had you seen the letter at first, and understood its covert intention: 'Let me not shackle the choice of the woman I love, and to whom an alliance so coveted in the eyes of the world might, if she were left free, be proffered.'"

"I should not have gathered from the postscript all that you see in it, but had its purport been so suggested to me, you are right, I should have so said. Well, and as Mr. Margrave tells me that you informed him that I have a rival, I am now to conclude that the rival is Mr. Ashleigh Sumner?"

"Has not Mrs. Ashleigh or Lilian mentioned him in writing to you?"

"Yes, both; Lilian very slightly; Mrs. Ashleigh with some praise, as a young man of high character and very courteous to her."

"Yet, though I asked you to come and tell me who were the guests at Lady Haughton's, you never did so."

"Pardon me; but of the guests I thought nothing, and letters addressed to my heart seemed to me too sacred to talk about. And Ashleigh Sumner then courts Lilian! How do you know?"

"I know everything that concerns me; and here, the explantion is simple. My aunt, Lady Delafield, is staying with Lady Haughton. Lady Delafield is one of the women of fashion who shine by their own light; Lady Haughton shines by borrowed light, and borrows every ray she can find."

"And Lady Delafield writes you word—"

"That Ashleigh Sumner is caught by Lilian's beauty."

"And Lilian herself—"

"Women like Lady Delafield do not readily believe that any girl could refuse Ashleigh Sumner; considered in himself, he is steady and good-looking; considered as owner of Kirby Hall and Haughton Park, he has, in the eyes of any sensible mother, the virtues of Cato and the beauty of Antinous."

I pressed my hand to my heart—close to my heart lay a letter from Lilian—and there was no word in that letter which showed that her heart was gone from mine. I shook my head gently, and smiled in confiding triumph.

Mrs. Poyntz surveyed me with a bent brow and a compressed lip.

"I understand your smile," she said ironically. "Very likely Lilian may be quite untouched by this young man's admiration, but Anne Ashleigh may be dazzled by so brilliant a prospect for her daughter. And, in short, I thought it desirable to let your engagement be publicly known throughout the

town to-day; that information will travel—it will reach Ashleigh Sumner through Mr. Vigors, or others in this neighborhood, with whom I know he corresponds. It will bring affairs to a crisis, and before it may be too late. I think it well that Ashleigh Sumner should leave that house; if he leave it for good, so much the better. And, perhaps, the sooner Lilian returns to L—— the lighter your own heart will be."

"And for these reasons you have published the secret of—"

"Your engagement? Yes. Prepare to be congratulated wherever you go. And now, if you hear either from mother or daughter, that Ashleigh Sumner has proposed, and been, let us say, refused, I do not doubt, that, in the pride of your heart, you will come and tell me."

"Rely upon it, I will; but before I take leave, allow me to ask, why you described to a young man like Mr. Margrave—whose wild and strange humors you have witnessed and not approved—any of those traits of character in Miss Ashleigh which distinguish her from other girls of her age?"

"I? You mistake. I said nothing to him of her character. I mentioned her name, and said she was beautiful, that was all."

"Nay, you said she was fond of musing, of solitude; that in her fancies she believed in the reality of visions which might flit before her eyes as they flit before the eyes of all imaginative dreamers."

"Not a word did I say to Mr. Margrave of such peculiarities in Lilian; not a word more than what I have told you, on my honor!"

Still incredulous, but disguising my incredulity with that convenient smile by which we accomplish so much of the polite dissimulation indispensable to the decencies of civilized life, I took my departure, returned home, and wrote to Lilian.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE conversation with Mrs. Poyntz left my mind restless and disquieted. I had no doubt, indeed, of Lilian's truth, but could I be sure that the attentions of a young man, with advantages of fortune so brilliant, would not force on her thoughts the contrast of the humbler lot and the duller walk of life in which she had accepted as companion a man removed from her romantic youth less by disparity of years than by gravity of pursuits? And would my suit now be welcomed as it had been

by a mother even so unworldly as Mrs. Ashleigh? Why, too, should both mother and daughter have left me so unprepared to hear that I had a rival? Why not have implied some consoling assurance that such rivalry need not cause me alarm? Lilian's letters, it is true, touched but little on any of the persons round her; they were filled with the outpourings of an ingenuous heart, colored by the glow of a golden fancy. They were written as if in the wide world we two stood apart alone, consecrated from the crowd by the love that, in linking us together, had hallowed each to the other. Mrs. Ashleigh's letters were more general and diffusive, detailed the habits of the household, sketched the guests, intimated her continued fear of Lady Haughton, but had said nothing more of Mr. Ashleigh Sumner than I had repeated to Mrs. Poyntz. However, in my letter to Lilian I related the intelligence that had reached me, and impatiently I awaited her reply.

Three days after the interview with Mrs. Poyntz, and two days before the long-anticipated event of the mayor's ball, I was summoned to attend a nobleman who had lately been added to my list of patients, and whose residence was about twelve miles from L——. The nearest way was through Sir Philip Derval's park. I went on horseback, and proposed to stop on the way to inquire after the steward, whom I had seen but once since his fit, and that was two days after it, when he called himself at my house to thank me for my attendance, and to declare that he was quite recovered.

As I rode somewhat fast through the park, I came, however, upon the steward, just in front of the house. I reined in my horse and accosted him. He looked very cheerful.

"Sir," said he, in a whisper, "I have heard from Sir Philip; his letter is dated since—since—my good woman told you what I saw—well, since then. So that it must have been all a delusion of mine, as you told her. And yet, well—well—we will not talk of it, doctor. But I hope you have kept the secret. Sir Philip would not like to hear of it, if he comes back."

"Your secret is quite safe with me. But is Sir Philip likely to come back?"

"I hope so, doctor. His letter is dated Paris, and that's nearer home than he has been for many years; and—but bless me—some one is coming out of the house? A young gentleman! Who can it be?"

I looked, and to my surprise I saw Margrave descending the stately stairs that led from the front door. The steward turned towards him, and I mechanically followed, for I was

curious to know what had brought Margrave to the house of the long-absent traveller.

It was easily explained. Mr. Margrave had heard at L—— much of the pictures and internal decorations of the mansion. He had, by dint of coaxing (he said, with his enchanting laugh), persuaded the old housekeeper to show him the rooms.

"It is against Sir Philip's positive orders to show the house to any stranger, sir; and the housekeeper has done very wrong," said the steward.

"Pray don't scold her. I dare say Sir Philip would not have refused me a permission he might not give to every idle sight-seer. Fellow-travellers have a freemasonry with each other; and I have been much in the same far countries as himself. I heard of him there, and could tell you more about him, I dare say, than you know yourself."

"You, sir! Pray do then."

"The next time I come," said Margrave gayly; and, with a nod to me, he glided off through the trees of the neighboring grove, along the winding footpath that led to the lodge.

"A very cool gentleman," muttered the steward; "but what pleasant ways he has! You seem to know him, sir. Who is he—may I ask?"

"Mr. Margrave. A visitor at L——, and he has been a great traveller, as he says; perhaps he met Sir Philip abroad."

"I must go and hear what he said to Mrs. Gates; excuse me, sir, but I am so anxious about Sir Philip."

"If it be not too great a favor, may I be allowed the same privilege granted to Mr. Margrave? To judge by the outside of the house, the inside must be worth seeing; still, if it be against Sir Philip's positive orders—"

"His orders were, not to let the Court become a show-house—to admit none without my consent—but I should be ungrateful indeed, doctor, if I refused that consent to you."

I tied my horse to the rusty gate of the terrace-walk, and followed the steward up the broad stairs of the terrace. The great doors were unlocked. We entered a lofty hall with a domed ceiling; at the back of the hall the grand staircase ascended by a double flight. The design was undoubtedly Vanbrugh's, an architect who, beyond all others, sought the effect of grandeur less in space than in proportion. But Vanbrugh's designs need the relief of costume and movement, and the forms of a more pompous generation, in the bravery of velvets and laces, glancing amid those gilded columns, or descending with stately tread those broad palatial stairs. His

halls and chambers are so made for festival and throng, that they become like deserted theatres, inexpressibly desolate, as we miss the glitter of the lamps and the movement of the actors.

The housekeeper had now appeared; a quiet, timid old woman. She excused herself for admitting Margrave—not very intelligibly. It was plain to see that she had, in truth, been unable to resist what the steward termed his "pleasant ways."

As if to escape from a scolding, she talked volubly all the time, bustling nervously through the rooms, along which I followed her guidance with a hushed footstep. The principal apartments were on the ground-floor, or, rather, a floor raised some ten or fifteen feet above the ground; they had not been modernized since the date in which they were built. Hangings of faded silk; tables of rare marble, and mouldered gilding; comfortless chairs at drill against the wall; pictures, of which connoisseurs alone could estimate the value, darkened by dust or blistered by sun and damp, made a general character of discomfort. On not one room, on not one nook, still lingered some old smile of home.

Meanwhile, I gathered from the housekeeper's rambling answers to questions put to her by the steward, as I moved on, glancing at the pictures, that Margrave's visit that day was not his first. He had been to the house twice before; his ostensible excuse that he was an amateur in pictures (though, as I had before observed, for that department of art he had no taste); but each time he had talked much of Sir Philip. He said that, though not personally known to him, he had resided in the same towns abroad, and had friends equally intimate with Sir Philip: but when the steward inquired if the visitor had given any information as to the absentee, it became very clear that Margrave had been rather asking questions than volunteering intelligence.

We had now come to the end of the state apartments, the last of which was a library. "And," said the old woman, "I don't wonder the gentleman knew Sir Philip, for he seemed a scholar, and looked very hard over the books, especially those old ones by the fireplace, which Sir Philip, Heaven bless him, was always poring into."

Mechanically I turned to the shelves by the fireplace, and examined the volumes ranged in that department. I found they contained the works of those writers whom we may class together under the title of mystics—Iamblichus and Plotinus:

Swedenborg and Behmen; Sandivogius, Van Helmont, Paracelsus, Cardan. Works, too, were there, by writers less renowned, on astrology, geomancy, chiromancy, etc. I began to understand among what class of authors Margrave had picked up the strange notions with which he was apt to interpolate the doctrines of practical philosophy.

"I suppose this library was Sir Philip's usual sitting-room?" said I.

"No, sir; he seldom sat here. This was his study"; and the old woman opened a small door, masked by false book-backs. I followed her into a room of moderate size, and evidently of much earlier date than the rest of the house. "It is the only room left of an older mansion," said the steward, in answer to my remark. "I have heard it was spared on account of the chimney-piece. But there is a Latin inscription which will tell you all about it. I don't know Latin myself."

The chimney-piece reached to the ceiling. The frieze of the lower part rested on rude stone caryatides; the upper part was formed of oak panels very curiously carved in the geometrical designs favored by the taste prevalent in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, but different from any I had ever seen in the drawings of old houses. And I was not quite unlearned in such matters, for my poor father was a passionate antiquary in all that relates to mediæval art. The design in the oak panels was composed of triangles interlaced with varied ingenuity, and enclosed in circular bands inscribed with the signs of the Zodiac.

On the stone frieze supported by the caryatides, immediately under the wood-work, was inserted a metal plate, on which was written, in Latin, a few lines to the effect that "in this room, Simon Forman, the seeker of hidden truth, taking refuge from unjust persecution, made those discoveries in nature which he committed, for the benefit of a wiser age, to the charge of his protector and patron, the worshipful Sir Miles Derval, knight."

Forman! The name was not quite unfamiliar to me; but it was not without an effort that my memory enabled me to assign it to one of the most notorious of those astrologers or soothsayers whom the superstition of an earlier age alternately persecuted and honored.

The general character of the room was more cheerful than the statelier chambers I had hitherto passed through, for it had still the look of habitation. The arm-chair by the fireplace; the knee-hole writing-table beside it; the sofa near the recess

of a large bay-window, with book-prop and candlestick screwed to its back; maps, coiled in their cylinders, ranged under the cornice; low, strong safes, skirting two sides of the room and apparently intended to hold papers and title-deeds; seals carefully affixed to their jealous locks. Placed on the top of these old-fashioned receptacles were articles familiar to modern use; a fowling-piece here; fishing-rods there; two or three simple flower-vases; a pile of music books; a box of crayons. All in this room seemed to speak of residence and ownership; of the idiosyncrasies of a lone single man, it is true, but of a man of one's own time—a country gentleman of plain habits but not uncultivated tastes.

I moved to the window; it opened by a sash upon a large balcony, from which a wooden stair wound to a little garden, not visible in front of the house, surrounded by a thick grove of evergreens, through which one broad vista was cut; and that vista was closed by a view of the mausoleum.

I stepped out into the garden—a patch of sward with a fountain in the centre, and parterres, now more filled with weeds than flowers. At the left corner was a tall wooden summer-house or pavilion—its door wide open. "Oh, that's where Sir Philip used to study many a long summer's night," said the steward.

"What! in that damp pavilion?"

"It was a pretty place enough then, sir; but it is very old. They say as old as the room you have just left."

"Indeed, I must look at it, then."

The walls of this summer-house had once been painted in the arabesques of the Renaissance period; but the figures were now scarcely traceable. The wood-work had started in some places, and the sunbeams stole through the chinks and played on the floor, which was formed from old tiles quaintly tesselated and in triangular patterns, similar to those I had observed in the chimney-piece. The room in the pavilion was large, furnished with old worm-eaten tables and settles.

"It was not only here that Sir Philip studied, but sometimes in the room above," said the steward.

"How do you get to the room above? Oh! I see; a staircase in the angle." I ascended the stairs with some caution, for they were crooked and decayed; and, on entering the room above, comprehended at once why Sir Philip had favored it.

The cornice of the ceiling rested on pilasters, within which the compartments were formed into open unglazed arches, surrounded by a railed balcony. Through these arches, on three

sides of the room the eye commanded a magnificent extent of prospect. On the fourth side the view was bounded by the mausoleum. In this room was a large telescope, and on stepping into the balcony, I saw that a winding stair mounted thence to a platform on the top of the pavilion—perhaps once used as an observatory by Forman himself.

"The gentleman who was here to-day was very much pleased with this look-out, sir," said the housekeeper.

"Who would not be ? I suppose Sir Philip has a taste for astronomy."

"I dare say, sir," said the steward, looking grave; "he likes most out-of-the-way things."

The position of the sun now warned me that my time pressed, and that I should have to ride fast to reach my new patient at the hour appointed. I therefore hastened back to my horse, and spurred on, wondering whether, in the chain of association which so subtly links our pursuits in manhood to our impressions in childhood, it was the Latin inscription on the chimney-piece that had originally biassed Philip Derval's literary taste towards the mystic jargon of the books at which I had contemptuously glanced.

CHAPTER XXIX.

I DID not see Margrave the following day, but the next morning, a little after sunrise, he walked into my study, according to his ordinary habit.

"So you know something about Sir Philip Derval?" said I. "What sort of a man is he?"

"Hateful!" cried Margrave; and then checking himself, burst out into his merry laugh. "Just like my exaggerations! I am not acquainted with anything to his prejudice. I came across his track once or twice in the East. Travellers are always apt to be jealous of each other."

"You are a strange compound of cynicism and credulity. But I should have fancied you and Sir Philip would have been congenial spirits, when I found, among his favorite books, Van Helmont and Paracelsus. Perhaps you, too, study Swedenborg, or, worse still, Ptolemy and Lilly?"

"Astrologers? No! They deal with the future! I live for the day; only I wish the day never had a morrow!"

"Have you not, then, that vague desire for the something beyond; that not unhappy, but grand discontent with the limits of the immediate Present, from which man takes his pas-

sion for improvement and progress, and from which some sentimental philosophers have deduced an argument in favor of his destined immortality?"

"Eh!" said Margrave, with as vacant a stare as that of a peasant whom one has addressed in Hebrew. "What farrago of words is this? I do not comprehend you."

"With your natural abilities," I asked with interest, "do you never feel a desire for fame?"

"Fame? Certainly not. I cannot even understand it!"

"Well, then, would you have no pleasure in the thought that you had rendered a service to humanity?"

Margrave looked bewildered: after a moment's pause, he took from the table a piece of bread that chanced to be there, opened the window, and threw the crumbs into the lane. The sparrows gathered round the crumbs.

"Now," said Margrave, "the sparrows come to that dull pavement for the bread that recruits their lives in this world; do you believe that one sparrow would be silly enough to fly to a house-top for the sake of some benefit to other sparrows, or to be chirruped about after he was dead? I care for science as a sparrow cares for bread; it may help to something good for my own life; and as for fame and humanity, I care for them as the sparrow cares for the general interest and posthumous approbation of sparrows!"

"Margrave, there is one thing in you that perplexes me more than all else—human puzzle as you are—in your many eccentricities and self-contradictions."

"What is that one thing in me most perplexing?"

"This; that in your enjoyment of Nature you have all the freshness of a child, but when you speak of Man and his objects in the world, you talk in the vein of some worn-out and hoary cynic. At such times, were I to close my eyes, I should say to myself, 'What weary old man is thus venting his spleen against the ambition which has failed, and the love which has forsaken him?' Outwardly the very personation of youth, and revelling like a butterfly in the warmth of the sun and the tints of the herbage, why have you none of the golden passions of the young? their bright dreams of some impossible love? their sublime enthusiasm for some unattainable glory? The sentiment you have just clothed in the illustration by which you place yourself on a level with the sparrows is too mean and too gloomy to be genuine at your age. Misanthropy is among the dismal fallacies of graybeards. No man, till man's energies leave him, can divorce himself from the bonds of our social kind."

"Our kind—your kind, possibly! But I—" He swept his hand over his brow, and resumed, in strange, absent, and wistful accents: "I wonder what it is that is wanting here, and of which at moments I have a dim reminiscence." Again he paused, and gazing on me, said with more appearance of friendly interest than I had ever before remarked in his countenance:

"You are not looking well. Despite your great physical strength, you suffer like your own sickly patients."

"True! I suffer at this moment, but not from bodily pain."

"You have some cause of mental disquietude?"

"Who in this world has not?"

"I never have."

"Because you own you have never loved; certainly, you never seem to care for any one but yourself; and in yourself you find an unbroken sunny holiday—high spirits, youth, health, beauty, wealth. Happy boy!"

At that moment my heart was heavy within me.

Margrave resumed:

"Among the secrets which your knowledge places at the command of your art, what would you give for one which would enable you to defy and to deride a rival where you place your affections, which could lock to yourself, and imperiously control, the will of the being whom you desire to fascinate, by an influence paramount, transcendent?"

"Love has that secret," said I, "and love alone."

"A power stronger than love can suspend, can change love itself. But if love be the object or dream of your life, love is the rosy associate of youth and beauty. Beauty soon fades, youth soon departs. What if in nature there were means by which beauty and youth can be fixed into blooming duration—means that could arrest the course, nay, repair the effects, of time on the elements that make up the human frame?"

"Silly boy! Have the Rosicrucians bequeathed to you a prescription for the elixir of life?"

"If I had the prescription I should not ask your aid to discover its ingredients."

"And is it in the hope of that notable discovery you have studied chemistry, electricity, and magnetism? Again I say, Silly boy!"

Margrave did not heed my reply. His face was overcast, gloomy, troubled.

"That the vital principle is a gas," said he abruptly, "I am fully convinced. Can that gas be the one which combines caloric with oxygen?"

"Phosoxygen? Sir Humphry Davy demonstrates that gas not to be, as Lavoisier supposed, caloric, but light, combined with oxygen; and he suggests, not indeed that it is the vital principle itself, but the pabulum of life to organic beings." *

"Does he?" said Margrave, his face clearing up. "Possibly, possibly then, here we approach the great secret of secrets. Look you, Allen Fenwick, I promise to secure to you unfailing security from all the jealous fears that now torture your heart; if you care for that fame which to me is not worth the scent of a flower, the balm of a breeze, I will impart to you a knowledge which, in the hands of ambition, would dwarf into commonplace the boasted wonders of recognized science. I will do all this, if, in return, but for one month you will give yourself up to my guidance in whatever experiments I ask, no matter how wild they may seem to you."

"My dear Margrave, I reject your bribes as I would reject the moon and the stars which a child might offer to me in exchange for a toy. But I may give the child its toy for nothing, and I may test your experiments for nothing some day when I have leisure."

I did not hear Margrave's answer, for at that moment my servant entered with letters. Lilian's hand! Tremblingly, breathlessly, I broke the seal. Such a loving, bright, happy letter; so sweet in its gentle chiding of my wrongful fears. It was implied rather than said that Ashleigh Sumner had proposed and been refused. He had now left the house. Lilian and her mother were coming back; in a few days we should meet. In this letter were enclosed a few lines from Mrs. Ashleigh. She was more explicit about my rival than Lilian had been. If no allusion to his attentions had been made to me before, it was from a delicate consideration for myself. Mrs. Ashleigh said that "the young man had heard from L—— of our engagement, and—disbelieved it"; but, as Mrs. Poyntz had so shrewdly predicted, hurried at once to the avowal of his own attachment, and the offer of his own hand. On Lilian's refusal his pride had been deeply mortified. He had gone away manifestly in more anger than sorrow. "Lady Delafield, dear Margaret Poyntz's aunt, had been most kind in trying to soothe Lady Haughton's disappointment, which was rudely expressed—so rudely," added Mrs. Ashleigh, "that it gives us an excuse to leave sooner than had been proposed—which I am very glad of. Lady Delafield feels much for Mr. Sumner; has invited him to visit her at a place she has near Worthing: she leaves

* See Sir Humphry Davy on Heat, Light, and the Combinations of Light

to-morrow in order to receive him; promises to reconcile him to our rejection, which, as he was my poor Gilbert's heir, and was very friendly at first, would be a great relief to my mind. Lilian is well, and so happy at the thoughts of coming back."

When I lifted my eyes from these letters I was a new man, and the earth seemed a new earth. I felt as if I *had* realized Margrave's idle dreams—as if youth could never fade, love could never grow cold.

"You care for no secrets of mine at this moment," said Margrave abruptly.

"Secrets," I murmured; "none now are worth knowing. I am loved—I am loved!"

"I bide my time," said Margrave; and as my eyes met his, I saw there a look I had never seen in those eyes before—sinister, wrathful, menacing. He turned away, went out through the sash door of the study; and as he passed towards the fields under the luxuriant chestnut-trees, I heard his musical, barbaric chant—the song by which the serpent-charmer charms the serpent,—sweet, so sweet—the very birds on the boughs hushed their carol as if to listen.

CHAPTER XXX.

I CALLED that day on Mrs. Poyntz, and communicated to her the purport of the glad news I had received. She was still at work on the everlasting knitting, her firm fingers linking mesh into mesh as she listened; and when I had done, she laid her skein deliberately down, and said, in her favorite characteristic formula:

"So at last?—that is settled!"

She rose and paced the room as men are apt to do in reflection—women rarely need such movement to aid their thoughts—her eyes were fixed on the floor, and one hand was lightly pressed on the palm of the other—the gesture of a musing reasoner who is approaching the close of a difficult calculation.

At length she paused, fronting me, and said, dryly:

"Accept my congratulations; life smiles on you now—guard that smile, and when we meet next, may we be even firmer friends than we are now!"

"When we meet next—that will be to-night—you surely go to the mayor's great ball? All the Hill descends to Low Town to-night."

"No; we are obliged to leave L—— this afternoon; in less than two hours we shall be gone—a family engagement. We

may be weeks away; you will excuse me, then, if I take leave of you so unceremoniously. Stay, a motherly word of caution. That friend of yours, Mr. Margrave! Moderate your intimacy with him; and especially after you are married. There is in that stranger, of whom so little is known, a something which I cannot comprehend—a something that captivates, and yet revolts. I find him disturbing my thoughts, perplexing my conjectures, haunting my fancies—I, plain woman of the world! Lilian is imaginative; beware of her imagination, even when sure of her heart. Beware of Margrave. The sooner he quits L——, the better, believe me, for your peace of mind. Adieu! I must prepare for our journey."

"That woman," muttered I, on quittting her house, "seems to have some spite against my poor Lilian, ever seeking to rouse my own distrust of that exquisite nature which has just given me such proof of its truth. And yet—and yet—is that woman so wrong here? True! Margrave with his wild notions, his strange beauty!—true—true—he might dangerously encourage that turn for the mystic and visionary which distresses me in Lilian. Lilian should not know him. How induce him to leave L——? Ah—those experiments on which he asks my assistance! I might commence them when he comes again, and then invent some excuse to send him for completer tests to the famous chemists of Paris or Berlin."

CHAPTER XXXI.

It is the night of the mayor's ball! The guests are assembling fast; county families twelve miles round have been invited, as well as the principal families of the town. All, before proceeding to the room set apart for the dance, moved in procession through the museum—homage to science before pleasure!

The building was brilliantly lighted, and the effect was striking, perhaps because singular and grotesque. There, amidst stands of flowers and evergreens, lit up with colored lamps, were grouped the dead representatives of races all inferior, some deadly, to man. The fancy of the ladies had been permitted to decorate and arrange these types of the animal world. The tiger glared with glass eyes from amidst artificial reeds and herbage, as from his native jungle; the grisly white bear peered from a mimic iceberg. There, in front, stood the sage elephant, facing a hideous hippopotamus; whilst an ana-

conda twined its long spire round the stems of some tropical tree in zinc. In glass cases, brought into full light by festooned lamps, were dread specimens of the reptile race—scorpion and vampire, and cobra-capella, with insects of gorgeous hues, not a few of them with venomed stings.

But the chief boast of the collection was in the varieties of the Genus Simia—baboons and apes, chimpanzees, with their human visage, mockeries of man, from the dwarf monkeys perched on boughs lopped from the mayor's shrubberies, to the formidable ourang-outang, leaning on his huge club.

Every one expressed to the mayor admiration; to each other atipathy, for this unwonted and somewhat ghastly, though instructive, addition to the revels of a ball-room.

Margrave, of course, was there, and seemingly quite at home, gliding from group to group of gayly-dressed ladies, and brilliant with a childish eagerness to play off the showman. Many of these grim fellow-creatures he declared he had seen, played, or fought with. He had something true or false to say about each. In his high spirits he contrived to make the tiger move, and imitated the hiss of the terrible anaconda. All that he did had its grace, its charm; and the buzz of admiration and the flattering glances of ladies' eyes followed him wherever he moved.

However, there was a general feeling of relief when the mayor led the way from the museum into the ball-room. In provincial parties guests arrive pretty much within the same hour, and so few who had once paid their respects to the apes and serpents, the hippopotamus and the tiger, were disposed to repeat the visit, that long before eleven o'clock the museum was as free from the intrusion of human life as the wilderness in which its dead occupants had been born.

I had gone my round through the rooms, and, little disposed to be social, had crept into the retreat of a window-niche, pleased to think myself screened by its draperies; not that I was melancholy, far from it—for the letter I had received that morning from Lilian had raised my whole being into a sovereignty of happiness high beyond the reach of the young pleasure-hunters, whose voices and laughter blended with that vulgar music.

To read her letter again I had stolen to my nook—and, now, sure that none saw me kiss it, I replaced it in my bosom. I looked through the parted curtain; the room was comparatively empty; but there, through the open folding-doors, I saw the gay crowd gathered round the dancers, and there again, at

right angles, a vista along the corridor afforded a glimpse of the great Elephant in the deserted museum.

Presently I heard, close beside me, my host's voice.

"Here's a cool corner, a pleasant sofa, you can have it all to yourself: what an honor to receive you under my roof, and on this interesting occasion! Yes, as you say, there are great changes in L—— since you left us. Society has much improved. I must look about and find some persons to introduce to you. Clever! oh, I know your tastes. We have a wonderful man—a new doctor. Carries all before him—very high character, too—good old family—greatly looked up to, even apart from his profession. Dogmatic a little—a Sir Oracle—'Lets no dog bark'; you remember the quotation—Shakspeare. Where on earth is he? My dear Sir Philip, I am sure you would enjoy his conversation."

Sir Philip! Could it be Sir Philip Derval to whom the mayor was giving a flattering, yet scarcely propitiatory, description of myself? Curiosity combined with a sense of propriety in not keeping myself an unsuspected listener: I emerged from the curtain, but silently, and reached the centre of the room before the mayor perceived me. He then came up to me eagerly, linked his arm in mine, and leading me to a gentleman seated on a sofa, close by the window I had quitted, said:

"Doctor, I must present you to Sir Philip Derval, just returned to England, and not six hours in L——. If you would like to see the museum again, Sir Philip, the doctor, I am sure, will accompany you."

"No, I thank you; it is painful to me at present, to see, even under your roof, the collection which my poor dear friend, Dr. Lloyd, was so proudly beginning to form when I left these parts."

"Ay, Sir Philip—Dr. Lloyd was a worthy man in his way, but sadly duped in his latter years; took to mesmerism, only think! But our young doctor here showed him up, I can tell you."

Sir Philip, who had acknowledged my first introduction to his acquaintance by the quiet courtesy with which a well-bred man goes through a ceremony that custom enables him to endure with equal ease and indifference, now evinced by a slight change of manner how little the mayor's deference to my dispute with Dr. Lloyd advanced me in his good opinion. He turned away with a bow more formal than his first one, and said calmly:

"I regret to hear that a man so simple-minded and so sen-

sitive as Dr. Lloyd should have provoked an encounter in which I can well conceive him to have been worsted. With your leave, Mr. Mayor, I will look into your ball-room. I may perhaps find there some old acquaintances."

He walked towards the dancers, and the mayor, linking his arm in mine, followed close behind, saying in his loud hearty tones:

"Come along, you too, Dr. Fenwick, my girls are there; you have not spoken to them yet."

Sir Philip, who was then half-way across the room, turned round abruptly, and, looking me full in the face, said:

"Fenwick, is your name Fenwick?—Allen Fenwick?"

"That is my name, Sir Philip."

"Then permit me to shake you by the hand; you are no stranger, and no mere acquaintance to me. Mr. Mayor, we will look into your ball-room later: do not let us keep you now from your other guests."

The mayor, not in the least offended by being thus summarily dismissed, smiled, walked on, and was soon lost amongst the crowd.

Sir Philip, still retaining my hand, reseated himself on the sofa, and I took my place by his side. The room was still deserted; now and then a straggler from the ball-room looked in for a moment, and then sauntered back to the central place of attraction.

"I am trying to guess," said I, "how my name should be known to you. Possibly you may, in some visit to the Lakes, have known my father?"

"No; I know none of your name but yourself—if, indeed, as I doubt not, you are the Allen Fenwick to whom I owe no small obligation. You were a medical student at Edinburgh in the year ——?"

"Yes."

"So! At that time there was also at Edinburgh a young man, named Richard Strahan. He lodged in a fourth flat in the Old Town."

"I remember him very well."

"And you remember, also, that a fire broke out at night in the house in which he lodged; that when it was discovered, there seemed no hope of saving him. The flames wrapt the lower part of the house; the staircase had given way. A boy, scarcely so old as himself, was the only human being in the crowd who dared to scale the ladder, that even then scarcely reached the windows from which the smoke rolled in volumes;

that boy penetrated into the room—found the inmate almost insensible—rallied, supported, dragged him to the window—got him on the ladder—saved his life then—and his life later, by nursing with a woman's tenderness, through the fever caused by terror and excitement, the fellow-creature he had rescued by a man's daring. The name of that gallant student was Allen Fenwick, and Richard Strahan is my nearest living relation. Are we friends now?"

I answered confusedly. I had almost forgotten the circumstances referred to. Richard Strahan had not been one of my more intimate companions; and I had never seen nor heard of him since leaving college. I inquired what had become of him.

"He is at the Scotch bar," said Sir Philip, "and of course without practice. I understand that he has fair average abilities, but no application. If I am rightly informed, he is, however, a thoroughly honorable, upright man, and of an affectionate and grateful disposition."

"I can answer for all you have said in his praise. He had the qualities you name too deeply rooted in youth to have lost them now."

Sir Philip remained for some moments in a musing silence. And I took advantage of that silence to examine him with more minute attention than I had done before, much as the first sight of him had struck me.

He was somewhat below the common height. So delicately formed that one might call him rather fragile than slight. But in his carriage and air there was remarkable dignity. His countenance was at direct variance with his figure. For as delicacy was the attribute of the last, so power was unmistakably the characteristic of the first. He looked fully the age his steward had ascribed to him—about forty-eight; at a superficial glance, more; for his hair was prematurely white—not gray, but white as snow. But his eyebrows were still jet black, and his eyes, equally dark, were serenely bright. His forehead was magnificent; lofty, and spacious, and with only one slight wrinkle between the brows. His complexion was sunburnt, showing no sign of weak health. The outline of his lips was that which I have often remarked in men accustomed to great dangers, and contracting in such dangers the habit of self-reliance; firm and quiet, compressed without an effort. And the power of this very noble countenance was not intimidating, not aggressive; it was mild, it was benignant. A man oppressed by some formidable tyranny, and despairing to find a

protector, would, on seeing that face, have said: "Here is one who can protect me, and who will!"

Sir Philip was the first to break the silence.

"I have so many relations scattered over England, that fortunately not one of them can venture to calculate on my property if I die childless, and therefore not one of them can feel himself injured, when, a few weeks hence, he shall read in the newspapers that Philip Derval is married. But for Richard Strahan, at least, though I never saw him, I must do something before the newspapers make that announcement. His sister was very dear to me."

"Your neighbors, Sir Philip, will rejoice at your marriage, since, I presume, it may induce you to settle amongst them at Derval Court."

"At Derval Court! No! I shall not settle there." Again he paused a moment or so, and then went on: "I have long lived a wandering life, and in it learned much that the wisdom of cities cannot teach. I return to my native land with a profound conviction that the happiest life is the life most in common with all. I have gone out of my way to do what I deemed good, and to avert or mitigate what appeared to me evil. I pause now and ask myself, whether the most virtuous existence be not that in which virtue flows spontaneously from the springs of quiet every day action—when a man does good without restlessly seeking it, does good unconsciously, simply because he is good and he lives? Better, perhaps, for me, if I had thought so long ago! And now I come back to England with the intention of marrying, late in life though it be, and with such hopes of happiness as any matter-of-fact man may form. But my hope will not be at Derval Court. I shall reside either in London or its immediate neighborhood, and seek to gather round me minds by which I can correct, if I cannot confide to them, the knowledge I myself have acquired."

"Nay, if, as I have accidentally heard, you are fond of scientific pursuits, I cannot wonder that, after so long an absence from England, you should feel interest in learning what new discoveries have been made, what new ideas are unfolding the germs of discoveries yet to be. But, pardon me, if in answer to your concluding remark, I venture to say that no man can hope to correct any error in his own knowledge, unless he has the courage to confide the error to those who can correct. La Place has said, '*Tout se tient dans le chaîne immense des vérités*'; and the mistake we make in some science we have specially cultivated is often to be seen by the light of a separate

science as specially cultivated by another. Thus, in the investigation of truth, frank exposition to congenial minds is essential to the earnest seeker."

"I am pleased with what you say," said Sir Philip, "and I shall be still more pleased to find in you the very confidant I require. But what was your controversy with my old friend, Dr. Lloyd? Do I understand our host rightly, that it related to what in Europe has of late days obtained the name of mesmerism?"

I had conceived a strong desire to conciliate the good opinion of a man who had treated me withso singular and so familiar a kindness, and it was sincerely that I expressed my regret at the acerbity with which I had assailed Dr. Lloyd; but of his theories and pretensions I could not disguise my contempt. I enlarged on the extravagant fallacies involved in a fabulous "clairvoyance," which always failed when put to plain test by sober-minded examiners. I did not deny the effects of imagination on certain nervous constitutions. "Mesmerism could cure nobody; credulity could cure many. There was the well-known story of the old woman tried as a witch; she cured agues by a charm; she owned the impeachment, and was ready to endure gibbet or stake for the truth of her talisman; more than a mesmerist would for the truth of his passes! And the charm was a scroll of gibberish sewn in an old bag and given to the woman in a freak by the judge himself when a young scamp on the circuit. But the charm cured? Certainly; just as mesmerism cures. Fools believed in it. Faith, that moves mountains, may well cure agues."

Thus I ran on, supporting my views with anecdote and facts, to which Sir Philip listened with placid gravity.

When I had come to an end, he said; "Of mesmerism, as practised in Europe I know nothing, except by report. I can well understand that medical men may hesitate to admit it amongst the legitimate resources of orthodox pathology; because, as I gather from what you and others say of its practice, it must, at the best, be far too uncertain in its application to satisfy the requirements of science. Yet an examination of its pretensions may enable you to perceive the truth that lies hid in the powers ascribed to witchcraft; benevolence is but a weak agency compared to malignity; magnetism perverted to evil may solve half the riddles of sorcery. On this, however, I say no more at present. But as to that which you appear to reject as the most preposterous and incredible pretension of the mesmerists, and which you designate by the word 'clairvoyance,'

it is clear to me that you have never yourself witnessed even those very imperfect exhibitions which you decide at once to be imposture. I say imperfect, because it is only a limited number of persons whom the eye or the passes of the mesmerist can affect, and by such means, unaided by other means, it is rarely indeed that the magnetic sleep advances beyond the first vague shadowy twilight dawn of that condition to which only in its fuller developments I would apply the name of 'trance.' But still trance is as essential a condition of being as sleep or as waking, having privileges peculiar to itself. By means within the range of the science that explores its nature and its laws, trance, unlike the clairvoyance you describe, is producible in every human being, however unimpressible to mere mesmerism."

"Producible in every human being! Pardon me if I say that I will give any enchanter his own terms who will produce that effect upon me."

"Will you? You consent to have the experiment tried on yourself?"

"Consent most readily."

"I will remember that promise. But to return to the subject. By the word trance I do not mean exclusively the spiritual trance of the Alexandrian Platonists. There is one kind of trance—that to which all human beings are susceptible—in which the soul has no share; for of this kind of trance, and it was of this I spoke, some of the inferior animals are susceptible: and, therefore, trance is no more a proof of soul than is the clairvoyance of the mesmerists, or the dream of our ordinary sleep, which last has been called a proof of soul, though any man who has kept a dog must have observed that dogs dream as vividly as we do. But in this trance there is an extraordinary cerebral activity—a projectile force given to the mind, distinct from the soul—by which it sends forth its own emanations to a distance in spite of material obstacles, just as a flower, in an altered condition of atmosphere, sends forth the particles of its aroma. This should not surprise you. Your thought travels over land and sea in your waking state; thought, too, can travel in trance, and in trance may acquire an intensified force. There is, however, another kind of trance which is truly called spiritual, a trance much more rare, and in which the soul entirely supersedes the mere action of the mind."

"Stay," said I; "you speak of the soul as something distinct from the mind. What the soul may be, I cannot pretend to conjecture. But I cannot separate it from the intelligence!"

"Can you not? A blow on the brain can destroy the intelligence! Do you think it can destroy the soul?

> 'From Marlbro's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
> And Swift expires, a driveller and a show.'

Towards the close of his life even Kant's giant intellect left him. Do you suppose that in these various archetypes of intellectual man the soul was worn out by the years that loosened the strings, or made tuneless the keys, of the perishing instrument on which the mind must rely for all notes of its music? If you cannot distinguish the operations of the mind from the essence of the soul, I know not by what rational inductions you arrive at the conclusion that the soul is imperishable."

I remained silent. Sir Philip fixed on me his dark eyes quietly and searchingly, and, after a short pause, said:

"Almost every known body in nature is susceptible of three several states of existence—the solid, the liquid, the aëriform. These conditions depend on the quantity of heat they contain. The same object at one moment may be liquid; at the next moment solid; at the next, aëriform. The water that flows before your gaze may stop consolidated into ice, or ascend into air as a vapor. Thus is man susceptible of three estates of existence—the animal, the mental, the spiritual—and according as he is brought into relation or affinity with that occult agency of the whole natural world, which we familiarly call HEAT, and which no science has yet explained; which no scale can weigh, and no eye discern; one or the other of these three states of beings prevails, or is subjected."

I still continued silent, for I was unwilling discourteously to say to a stranger, so much older than myself, that he seemed to me to reverse all the maxims of the philosophy to which he made pretence, in founding speculations audacious and abstruse upon unanalogous comparisons that would have been fantastic even in a poet. And Sir Philip, after another pause, resumed with a half-smile:

"After what I have said, it will perhaps not very much surprise you when I add that but for my belief in the powers I ascribe to trance, we should not be known to each other at this moment."

"How—pray explain!"

"Certain circumstances which I trust to relate to you in detail hereafter, have imposed on me the duty to discover, and to bring human laws to bear upon, a creature armed with terrible powers of evil. This monster, for, without metaphor, monster

it is, not man like ourselves, has, by arts superior to those of ordinary fugitives, however dexterous in concealment, hitherto for years eluded my search. Through the trance of an Arab child, who, in her waking state, never heard of his existence, I have learned that this being is in England—is in L——. I am here to encounter him. I expect to do so this very night, and under this very roof."

"Sir Philip!"

"And if you wonder, as you well may, why I have been talking to you with this startling unreserve, know that the same Arab child, on whom I thus implicitly rely, informs me that your life is mixed up with that of the being I seek to unmask and disarm—to be destroyed by his arts or his agents, or to combine in the causes by which the destroyer himself shall be brought to destruction."

"My life—your Arab child named me, Allen Fenwick?"

"My Arab child told me that the person in whom I should thus naturally seek an ally was he who had saved the life of the man whom I then meant for my heir, if I died unmarried and childless. She told me that I should not be many hours in this town, which she described minutely, before you would be made known to me. She described this house, with yonder lights, and yon dancers. In her trance she saw us sitting together, as we now sit. I accepted the invitation of our host, when he suddenly accosted me on entering the town, confident that I should meet you here, without even asking whether a person of your name were a resident in the place; and now you know why I have so freely unbosomed myself of much that might well make you, a physician, doubt the soundness of my understanding. The same infant, whose vision has been realized up to this moment, has warned me also that I am here at great peril. What that peril may be I have declined to learn, as I have ever declined to ask from the future, what affects only my own life on this earth. That life I regard with supreme indifference, conscious that I have only to discharge, while it lasts, the duties for which it is bestowed on me, to the best of my imperfect power: and aware that minds the strongest and souls the purest may fall into the sloth habitual to predestinarians, if they suffer the action due to the present hour to be awed and paralyzed by some grim shadow on the future! It is only where, irrespectively of aught that can menace myself, a light not struck out of my own reason can guide me to disarm evil or minister to good, that I feel privileged to avail myself of those mirrors on which things, near and far, reflect them-

selves calm and distinct as the banks and the mountain peak are reflected in the glass of a lake. Here, then, under this roof, and by your side, I shall behold him who—Lo! the moment has come —I behold him now!"

As he spoke these last words, Sir Philip had risen, and, stratled by his action and voice, I involuntarily rose too.

Resting one hand on my shoulder, he pointed with the other towards the threshold of the ball-room. There, the prominent figure of a gay group, the sole male amidst a fluttering circle of silks and lawn, of flowery wreaths, of female loveliness, and female frippery, stood the radiant image of Margrave. His eyes were not turned towards us. He was looking down, and his light laugh came soft, yet ringing, through the general murmur.

I turned my astonished gaze back to Sir Philip—yes, unmistakably it was on Margrave that his look was fixed.

Impossible to associate crime with the image of that fair youth! Eccentric notions, fantastic speculations, vivacious egotism, defective benevolence—yes. But crime!—No—impossible.

"Impossible," I said, aloud. As I spoke, the group had moved on. Margrave was no longer in sight. At the same moment some other guests came from the ball-room, and seated themselves near us.

Sir Philip looked round, and observing the deserted museum at the end of the corridor, drew me into it.

When we were alone, he said in a voice quick and low, but decided:

"It is of importance that I should convince you at once of the nature of that prodigy which is more hostile to mankind than the wolf is to the sheepfold. No words of mine could at present suffice to clear your sight from the deception which cheats it. I must enable you to judge for yourself. It must be now and here. He will learn this night, if he has not learned already, that I am in the town. Dim and confused though his memories of myself may be, they are memories still; and he well knows what cause he has to dread me. I must put another in possession of his secret. Another, and at once! For all his arts will be brought to bear against me, and I cannot foretell their issue. Go, then; enter that giddy crowd—select that seeming young man—bring him hither. Take care only not to mention my name; and when here, turn the key in the door, so as to prevent interruption—five minutes will suffice."

"Am I sure that I guess whom you mean? The young light-hearted man, known in this place under the name of Mar-

grave? The young man with the radiant eyes, and the curls of a Grecian statue?"

"The same; him whom I pointed out; quick, bring him hither."

My curiosity was too much roused to disobey. Had I conceived that Margrave, in the heat of youth, had committed some offence which placed him in danger of the law and in the power of Sir Philip Derval, I possessed enough of the old borderers' blackmail loyalty to have given the man whose hand I had familiarly clasped a hint and a help to escape. But all Sir Philip's talk had been so out of the reach of common-sense, that I rather expected to see him confounded by some egregious illusion than Margrave exposed to any well-grounded accusation. All, then, that I felt as I walked into the ball-room and approached Margrave, was that curiosity which, I think, any one of my readers will acknowledge that, in my position, himself would have felt.

Margrave was standing near the dancers, not joining them, but talking with a young couple in the ring. I drew him aside.

"Come with me for a few minutes into the museum; I wish to talk to you."

"What about?—an experiment?"

"Yes, an experiment."

"Then I am at your service."

In a minute more, he had followed me into the desolate dead museum. I looked round, but did not see Sir Philip.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MARGRAVE threw himself on a seat just under the great anaconda; I closed and locked the door. When I had done so, my eye fell on the young man's face, and I was surprised to see that it had lost its color; that it showed great anxiety, great distress; that his hands were visibly trembling.

"What is this?" he said, in feeble tones, and raising himself half from his seat as if with great effort. "Help me up—come away! Something in this room is hostile to me—hostile, overpowering! What can it be?"

"Truth and my presence," answered a stern, low voice; and Sir Philip Derval, whose slight form the huge bulk of the dead elephant had before obscured from my view, came suddenly out from the shadow into the full rays of the lamps which lit

up, as if for Man's revel, that mocking catacomb for the playmates of Nature which he enslaves for his service or slays for his sport. As Sir Philip spoke and advanced, Margrave sank back into his seat, shrinking collapsing, nerveless; terror the most abject expressed in his staring eyes and parted lips. On the other hand, the simple dignity of Sir Philip Derval's bearing, and the mild power of his countenance, were alike inconceivably heightened. A change had come over the whole man, the more impressive because wholly undefinable.

Halting opposite Margrave he uttered some words in a language unknown to me, and stretched one hand over the young man's head. Margrave at once became stiff and rigid as if turned to stone. Sir Philip said to me:

"Place one of those lamps on the floor—there, by his feet."

I took down one of the colored lamps from the mimic tree round which the huge anaconda coiled its spires, and placed it as I was told.

"Take the seat opposite to him and watch."

I obeyed.

Meanwhile, Sir Philip had drawn from his breast-pocket a small steel casket, and I observed, as he opened it, that the interior was subdivided into several compartments, each with its separate lid; from one of these he took and sprinkled over the flame of the lamp a few grains of a powder, colorless and sparkling as diamond dust; in a second or so, a delicate perfume, wholly unfamiliar to my sense, rose from the lamp.

"You would test the condition of trance; test it, and in the spirit."

And, as he spoke, his hand rested lightly on my head. Hitherto, amidst a surprise not unmixed with awe, I had preserved a certain defiance, a certain distrust. I had been as it were, on my guard.

But as those words were spoken, as that hand rested on my head, as that perfume arose from the lamp, all power of will deserted me. My first sensation was that of passive subjugation; but soon I was aware of a strange intoxicating effect from the odor of the lamp, round which there now played a dazzling vapor. The room swam before me. Like a man oppressed by a nightmare, I tried to move, to cry out; feeling that to do so would suffice to burst the thrall that bound me: in vain.

A time that seemed to me inexorably long, but which, as I found afterwards, could only have occupied a few seconds, elapsed in this preliminary state, which, however powerless,

was not without a vague, luxurious sense of delight. And then suddenly came pain—pain, that in rapid gradations passed into a rending agony. Every bone, sinew, nerve, fibre of the body seemed as if wrenched open, and as if some hitherto unconjectured Presence in the vital organization were forcing itself to light with all the pangs of travail. The veins seemed swollen to bursting, the heart laboring to maintain its action by fierce spasms. I feel in this description how language fails me. Enough that the anguish I then endured surpassed all that I have ever experienced of physical pain. This dreadful interval subsided as suddenly as it had commenced. I felt as if a something undefinable by any name had rushed from me, and in that rush that a struggle was over. I was sensible of the passive bliss which attends the release from torture, and then there grew on me a wonderful calm, and, in that calm, a consciousness of some lofty intelligence immeasurably beyond that which human memory gathers from earthly knowledge. I saw before me the still rigid form of Margrave, and my sight seemed, with ease, to penetrate through its covering of flesh, and to survey the mechanism of the whole interior being.

"View that tenement of clay which now seems so fair, as it was when I last beheld it, three years ago, in the house of Haroun of Aleppo!"

I looked, and gradually, and as shade after shade falls on the mountain-side, while the clouds gather, and the sun vanishes at last, so the form and face on which I looked changed from exuberant youth into infirm old age. The discolored, wrinkled skin, the bleared, dim eye, the flaccid muscles, the brittle, sapless bones. Nor was the change that of age alone; the expression of the countenance had passed into gloomy discontent, and in every furrow a passion or a vice had sown the seeds of grief.

And the brain now opened on my sight, with all its labyrinth of cells. I seemed to have the clue to every winding in the maze.

I saw therein a moral world, charred and ruined, as, in some fable I have read, the world of the moon is described to be; yet withal it was a brain of magnificent formation. The powers abused to evil had been originally of rare order; imagination and scope; the energies that dare; the faculties that discover. But the moral part of the brain had failed to dominate the mental. Defective veneration of what is good or great; cynical disdain of what is right and just; in fine, a great intellect, first misguided, then perverted, and now falling with the decay of

the body into ghastly but imposing ruins. Such was the world of that brain as it had been three years ago. And still continuing to gaze thereon, I observed three separate emanations of light; the one of a pale red hue, the second of a pale azure, the third a silvery spark.

The red light, which grew paler and paler as I looked, undulated from the brain along the arteries, the veins, the nerves. And I murmured to myself: "Is this the principle of animal life?"

The azure light equally permeated the frame, crossing and uniting with the red, but in a separate and distinct ray, exactly as, in the outer world, a ray of light crosses or unites with a ray of heat, though in itself a separate individual agency. And again I murmured to myself: "Is this the principle of intellectual being, directing or influencing that of animal life; with it, yet not of it?"

But the silvery spark! What was that? Its centre seemed the brain. But I could fix it to no single organ. Nay, whereever I looked through the system, it reflected itself as a star reflects itself upon water. And I observed that while the red light was growing feebler and feebler, and the azure light was confused, irregular—now obstructed, now hurrying, now almost lost—the silvery spark was unaltered, undisturbed. So independent of all which agitated and vexed the frame, that I became strangely aware that if the heart stopped in its action, and the red light died out, if the brain were paralyzed, that energetic mind smitten into idiotcy and the azure light wandering objectless as a meteor wanders over the morass,—still that silver spark would shine the same, indestructible by aught that shattered its tabernacle. And I murmured to myself: "Can that starry spark speak the presence of the soul? Does the silver light shine within creatures to which no life immortal has been promised by Divine Revelation?"

Involuntarily I turned my sight towards the dead forms in the motley collection, and lo, in my trance or my vision, life returned to them all! To the elephant and the serpent; to the tiger, the vulture, the beetle, the moth; to the fish and the polypus, and to yon mockery of man in the giant ape.

I seemed to see each as it lived in its native realm of earth, or of air, or of water; and the red light played more or less warm, through the structure of each, and the azure light, though duller of hue, seemed to shoot through the red, and communicate to the creatures an intelligence far inferior indeed to that of man, but sufficing to conduct the current of their will, and

influence the cunning of their instincts. But in none, from the elephant to the moth, from the bird in which brain was the largest, to the hybrid in which life seemed to live as in plants—in none was visible the starry silver spark. I turned my eyes from the creatures around, back again to the form cowering under the huge anaconda, and in terror at the animation which the carcases took in the awful illusions of that marvellous trance. For the tiger moved as if scenting blood, and to the eyes of the serpent the dread fascination seemed slowly returning.

Again I gazed on the starry spark in the form of the man. And I murmured to myself: "But if this be the soul, why is it so undisturbed and undarkened by the sins which have left such trace and such ravage in the world of the brain?" And gazing yet more intently on the spark, I became vaguely aware that it was not the soul, but the halo around the soul, as the star we see in heaven is not the star itself, but its circle of rays. And if the light itself was undisturbed and undarkened it was because no sins done in the body could annihilate its essence, nor affect the eternity of its duration. The light was clear within the ruins of its lodgment, because it might pass away, but could not be extinguished.

But the soul itself in the heart of the light reflected back on my own soul within me its ineffable trouble, humiliation, and sorrow; for those ghastly wrecks of power placed at its sovereign command it was responsible; and, appalled by its own sublime fate of duration, was about to carry into eternity the account of its mission in time. Yet it seemed that while the soul was still there, though so forlorn and so guilty, even the wrecks around it were majestic. And the soul, whatever sentence it might merit, was not among the hopelessly lost. For in its remorse and its shame, it might still have retained what could serve for redemption. And I saw that the mind was storming the soul in some terrible rebellious war—all of thought, of passion, of desire, through which the azure light poured its restless flow, were surging up round the starry spark, as in siege. And I could not comprehend the war, nor guess what it was that the mind demanded the soul to yield. Only the distinction between the two was made intelligible by their antagonism. And I saw that the soul, sorely tempted, looked afar for escape from the subjects it had ever so ill controlled, and who sought to reduce to their vassal the power which had lost authority as their king. I could feel its terror in the sympathy of my own terror, the keenness of my own supplicating pity. I knew that it was imploring release from the perils it confessed

its want of strength to encounter. And suddenly the starry spark rose from the ruins and the tumult around it—rose into space and vanished. And where my soul had recognized the presence of soul, there was a void. But the red light burned still, becoming more and more vivid; and as it thus repaired and recruited its lustre, the whole animal form which had been so decrepit, grew restored from decay, grew into vigor and youth: and I saw Margrave as I had seen him in the waking world, the radiant image of animal life in the beauty of its fairest bloom.

And over this rich vitality and this symmetric mechanism now reigned only, with the animal life, the mind. The starry light fled and the soul vanished, still was left visible the mind: mind, by which sensations convey and cumulate ideas, and muscles obey volition; mind, as in those animals that have more than the elementary instincts; mind, as it might be in men, were men not immortal. As my eyes, in the Vision, followed the azure light, undulating, as before, through the cells of the brain, and crossing the red amidst the labyrinth of the nerves, I perceived that the essence of that azure light had undergone a change: it had lost that faculty of continuous and concentred power by which man improves on the works of the past, and weaves schemes to be developed in the future of remote generations; it had lost all sympathy in the past, because it had lost all conception of a future beyond the grave; it had lost conscience, it had lost remorse; the being it informed was no longer accountable through eternity for the employment of time. The azure light was even more vivid in certain organs useful to the conservation of existence, as in those organs I had observed it more vivid among some of the inferior animals than it is in man—secretiveness, destructiveness, and the ready perception of things immediate to the wants of the day. And the azure light was brilliant in cerebral cells, where before it had been dark, such as those which harbor mirthfulness and hope, for there the light was recruited by the exuberant health of the joyous animal being. But it was lead-like, or dim, in the great social organs through which man subordinates his own interest to that of his species, and utterly lost in those through which man is reminded of his duties to the throne of his Maker.

In that marvellous penetration with which the Vision endowed me, I perceived that in this mind, though in energy far superior to many; though retaining, from memories of the former existence, the relics of a culture wide and in some things profound; though sharpened and quickened into formidable,

if desultory, force whenever it schemed or aimed at the animal self-conservation which now made its master impulse or instinct; and though among the reminiscences of its state before its change were arts which I could not comprehend, but which I felt were dark and terrible, lending to a will never checked by remorse, arms that no healthful philosophy has placed in the arsenal of disciplined genius; though the mind in itself had an ally in a body as perfect in strength and elasticity as man can take from the favor of nature—still, I say, I felt that that mind wanted *the something*, without which men never could found cities, frame laws, bind together, beautify, exalt the elements of this world, by creeds that habitually subject them to a reference to another. The ant, and the bee, and the beaver congregate and construct; but they do not improve. Man improves because the future impels onward that which is not found in the ant, the bee, and the beaver—that which was gone from the being before me.

I shrank appalled into myself, covered my face with my hands, and groaned aloud: "Have I ever then doubted that soul is distinct from mind?"

A hand here again touched my forehead, the light in the lamp was extinguished, I became insensible, and when I recovered I found myself back in the room in which I had first conversed with Sir Philip Derval, and seated, as before, on the sofa, by his side.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

My recollections of all which I have just attempted to describe were distinct and vivid; except with respect to time, it seemed to me as if many hours must have elapsed since I had entered the museum with Margrave; but the clock on the mantelpiece met my eyes as I turned them wistfully round the room; and I was indeed amazed to perceive that five minutes had sufficed for all which it had taken me so long to narrate, and which in their transit had hurried me through ideas and emotions so remote from anterior experience.

To my astonishment now succeeded shame and indignation—shame that I, who had scoffed at the possibility of the comparatively credible influences of mesmeric action, should have been so helpless a puppet under the hand of the slight fellow-man beside me, and so morbidly impressed by phantasmagorical illusions; indignation that, by some fumes which had special potency over the brain, I had thus been, as it were,

conjured out of my senses; and, looking full into the calm face at my side, I said, with a smile to which I sought to convey disdain:

"I congratulate you, Sir Philip Derval, on having learned in your travels in the East so expert a familiarity with the tricks of its jugglers."

"The East has a proverb," answered Sir Philip, quietly, "that the juggler may learn much from the dervish, but the dervish can learn nothing from the juggler. You will pardon me, however, for the effect produced on you for a few minutes, whatever the cause of it may be, since it may serve to guard your whole life from calamities, to which it might otherwise have been exposed. And however you may consider that which you have just experienced to be a mere optical illusion, or the figment of a brain super-excited by the fumes of a vapor, look within yourself and tell me if you do not feel an inward and unanswerable conviction that there is more reason to shun and to fear the creature you left asleep under the dead jaws of the giant serpent, than there would be in the serpent itself, could hunger again move its coils, and venom again arm its fangs."

I was silent, for I could not deny that that conviction had come to me.

"Henceforth, when you recover from the confusion or anger which now disturbs your impressions, you will be prepared to listen to my explanations and my recital, in a spirit far different from that with which you would have received them before you were subjected to the experiment, which, allow me to remind you, you invited and defied. You will now, I trust, be fitted to become my confidant and my assistant; you will advise with me how, for the sake of humanity, we should act together against the incarnate lie, the anomalous prodigy which glides through the crowd in the image of joyous beauty. For the present I quit you. I have an engagement, on worldly affairs, in the town this night. I am staying at L——, which I shall leave for Derval Court to-morrow evening. Come to me there the day after to-morrow; at any hour that may suit you the best. Adieu!"

Here, Sir Philip Derval rose and left the room. I made no effort to detain him. My mind was too occupied in striving to recompose itself, and account for the phenomena that had scared it, and for the strength of the impressions it still retained.

I sought to find natural and accountable causes for effects so abnormal.

Lord Bacon suggests that the ointments with which witches anointed themselves might have had the effect of stopping the pores and congesting the brain, and thus impressing the sleep of the unhappy dupes of their own imagination with dreams so vivid that, on waking, they were firmly convinced that they had been borne through the air to the *Sabbat*.

I remember also having heard a distinguished French traveller, whose veracity was unquestionable, say, that he had witnessed extraordinary effects produced on the sensorium by certain fumigations used by an African pretender to magic. A person, of however healthy a brain, subjected to the influence of these fumigations, was induced to believe that he saw the most frightful apparitions.

However extraordinary such effects, they were not incredible—not at variance with our notions of the known laws of nature. And to the vapor or the odors which a powder applied to a lamp had called forth, I was, therefore, prepared to ascribe properties similar to those which Bacon's conjecture ascribed to the witches' ointment; and the French traveller to the fumigations of the African conjuror.

But, as I came to that conclusion, I was seized with an intense curiosity to examine for myself those chemical agencies with which Sir Philip Derval appeared so familiar; to test the contents in that mysterious casket of steel. I also felt a curiosity no less eager, but more, in spite of myself, intermingled with fear, to learn all that Sir Philip had to communicate of the past history of Margrave. I could but suppose that the young man must indeed be a terrible criminal, for a person of years so grave, and station so high, to intimate accusations so vaguely dark, and to use means so extraordinary, in order to enlist my imagination rather than my reason against a youth in whom there appeared none of the signs which suspicion interprets into guilt.

While thus musing, I lifted my eyes and saw Margrave himself there, at the threshold of the ball-room—there, where Sir Philip had first pointed him out as the criminal he had come to L—— to seek and disarm; and now, as then, Margrave was the radiant centre of a joyous group; not the young boy-god Iacchus, amidst his nymphs, could, in Grecian frieze or picture, have seemed more the type of the sportive, hilarious vitality of sensuous nature. He must have passed, unobserved by me in my preoccupation of thought, from the museum and across the room in which I sat; and now there was as little trace in that animated countenance of the terror it had exhib-

ited at Sir Philip's approach, as of the change it had undergone in my trance or my phantasy.

But he caught sight of me—left his young companions—came gayly to my side.

"Did you not ask me to go with you into that museum about half an hour ago, or did I dream that I went with you?"

"Yes; you went with me into that museum."

"Then pray what dull theme did you select to set me asleep there?"

I looked hard at him, and made no reply. Somewhat to my relief, I now heard my host's voice:

"Why, Fenwick, what has become of Sir Philip Derval?"

"He has left; he had business." And, as I spoke, again I looked hard on Margrave.

His countenance now showed a change; not surprise, not dismay, but rather a play of the lip, a flash of the eye, that indicated complacency—even triumph.

"So! Sir Philip Derval! He is in L——; he has been here to-night? So! as I expected."

"Did you expect it?" said our host. "No one else did. Who could have told you?"

"The movements of men so distinguished need never take us by surprise. I knew he was in Paris the other day. It is natural eno' that he should come here. I was prepared for his coming."

Margrave here turned away towards the window, which he threw open and looked out.

"There is a storm in the air," said he, as he continued to gaze into the night.

Was it possible that Margrave was so wholly unconscious of what had passed in the museum, as to include in oblivion even the remembrance of Sir Philip Derval's presence before he had been rendered insensible, or laid asleep? Was it now only for the first time that he learned of Sir Philip's arrival in L——, and visit to that house? Was there any intimation of menace in his words and his aspect?

I felt that the trouble of my thoughts communicated itself to my countenance and manner; and, longing for solitude and fresh air, I quitted the house. When I found myself in the street, I turned round and saw Margrave still standing at the open window, but he did not appear to notice me; his eyes seemed fixed abstractedly on space.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

I WALKED on slowly and with the downcast brow of a man absorbed in meditation. I had gained the broad place in which the main streets of the town converged, when I was overtaken by a violent storm of rain. I sought shelter under the dark archway of that entrance to the district of Abbey Hill, which was still called Monk's Gate. The shadow within the arch was so deep that I was not aware that I had a companion till I heard my own name, close at my side. I recognized the voice before I could distinguish the form of Sir Philip Derval.

"The storm will soon be over," said he quietly. "I saw it coming on in time. I fear you neglected the first warning of those sable clouds, and must be already drenched."

I made no reply, but moved involuntarily away towards the mouth of the arch.

"I see that you cherish a grudge against me!" resumed Sir Philip. "Are you, then, by nature vindictive?"

Somewhat softened by the friendly tone of this reproach, I answered, half in jest, half in earnest:

"You must own, Sir Philip, that I have some little reason for the uncharitable anger your question imputes to me. But I can forgive you on one condition."

"What is that?"

"The possession, for half an hour, of that mysterious steel casket which you carry about with you, and full permission to analyze and test its contents."

"Your analysis of the contents," returned Sir Philip dryly, "would leave you as ignorant as before of the uses to which they can be applied. But I will own to you frankly, that it is my intention to select some confidant among men of science, to whom I may safely communicate the wonderful properties which certain essences in that casket possess. I invite your acquaintance, nay, your friendship, in the hope that I may find such a confidant in you. But the casket contains other combinations, which, if wasted, could not be re-supplied; at least by any process which the great Master from whom I received them placed within reach of my knowledge. In this they resemble the diamond; when the chemist has found that the diamond affords no other substance by its combustion than pure carbonic acid gas, and that the only chemical difference between the costliest diamond and a lump of pure charcoal is

a proportion of hydrogen less than $\frac{1}{60000}$ part of the weight of the substance—can the chemist make you a diamond?"

"These, then, the more potent, but also the more perilous, of the casket's contents, shall be explored by no science, submitted to no test. They are the keys to masked doors in the ramparts of Nature, which no mortal can pass through without rousing dread sentries never seen upon this side her wall. The powers they confer are secrets locked in my breast, to be lost in my grave; as the casket which lies on my breast shall not be transferred to the hands of another, till all the rest of my earthly possessions pass away with my last breath in life, and my first in eternity."

"Sir Philip Derval," said I, struggling against the appeals to fancy or to awe, made in words so strange, uttered in a tone of earnest conviction, and heard amidst the glare of the lightning, the howl of the winds, and the roll of the thunder; "Sir Philip Derval, you accost me in language which, but for my experience of the powers at your command, I should hear with the contempt that is due to the vaunts of a mountebank, or the pity we give to the morbid beliefs of his dupe. As it is, I decline the confidence with which you would favor me, subject to the conditions which it seems you would impose. My profession abandons to quacks all drugs which may not be analyzed, all secrets which may not be fearlessly told. I cannot visit you at Derval Court. I cannot trust myself, voluntarily, again in the power of a man, who has arts of which I may not examine the nature, by which he can impose on my imagination and steal away my reason."

"Reflect well before you decide," said Sir Philip, with a solemnity that was stern. "If you refuse to be warned and to be armed by me, your reason and your imagination will alike be subjected to influences which I can only explain by telling you that there is truth in those immemorial legends which dispose to the existence of magic."

"Magic!"

"There is magic of two kinds—the dark and evil, appertaining to witchcraft and necromancy; the pure and beneficent, which is but philosophy, applied to certain mysteries in Nature remote from the beaten tracks of science, but which deepened the wisdom of ancient sages, and can yet unriddle the myths of departed races."

"Sir Philip," I said, with impatient and angry interruption, "if you think that a jargon of this kind be worthy a man of your acquirements and station, it is at least a waste of time to

address it to me. I am led to conclude that you desire to make use of me for some purpose which I have a right to suppose honest and blameless, because all you know of me is, that I rendered to your relation services which cannot lower my character in your eyes. If your object be, as you have intimated, to aid you in exposing and disabling a man whose antecedents have been those of guilt, and who threatens with danger the society which receives him, you must give me proofs that are not reducible to magic; and you must prepossess me against the person you accuse, not by powders and fumes that disorder the brain, but by substantial statements, such as justify one man in condemning another. And, since you have thought fit to convince me that there are chemical means at your disposal, by which the imagination can be so affected as to accept, temporarily, illusions for realities, so I again demand, and now still more decidedly than before, that while you address yourself to my reason, whether to explain your object or to vindicate your charges against a man whom I have admitted to my acquaintance, you will divest yourself of all means and agencies to warp my judgment, so illicit and fraudulent as those which you own yourself to possess. Let the casket, with all its contents, be transferred to my hands, and pledge me your word that, in giving that casket, you reserve to yourself no other means by which chemistry can be abused to those influences over physical organization, which ignorance or imposture may ascribe to—magic."

"I accept no conditions for my confidence, though I think the better of you for attempting to make them. If I live, you will seek me yourself, and implore my aid. Meanwhile, listen to me, and—"

"No; I prefer the rain and the thunder to the whispers that steal to my ear in the dark from one of whom I have reason to beware."

So saying, I stepped forth, and at that moment the lightning flashed through the arch, and brought into full view the face of the man beside me. Seen by that glare, it was pale as the face of a corpse, but its expression was compassionate and serene.

I hesitated, for the expression of that hueless countenance touched me; it was not the face which inspires distrust or fear.

"Come," said I gently; "grant my demand. The casket—"

"It is no scruple of distrust that now makes that demand; it is a curiosity which in itself is a fearful tempter. Did you now possess what at this moment you desire, how bitterly you would repent!"

"Do you still refuse my demand "

"I refuse."

"If then you really need me, it is you who will repent."

I passed from the arch into the open space. The rain had passed, the thunder was more distant. I looked back when I had gained the opposite side of the way, at the angle of a street which led to my own house. As I did so, again the skies lightened, but the flash was comparatively slight and evanescent; it did not penetrate the gloom of the arch; it did not bring the form of Sir Philip into view; but, just under the base of the outer buttress to the gateway, I descried the outline of a dark figure, cowering down, huddled up for shelter, the outline so indistinct, and so soon lost to sight as the flash faded, that I could not distinguish if it were man or brute. If it were some chance passer-by, who had sought refuge from the rain, and overheard any part of our strange talk, "the listener," thought I, with a half-smile, "must have been mightily perplexed."

CHAPTER XXXV.

On reaching my own home, I found my servant sitting up for me with the information that my attendance was immediately required. The little boy whom Margrave's carelessness had so injured, and for whose injury he had shown so little feeling, had been weakened by the confinement which the nature of the injury required, and for the last few days had been generally ailing. The father had come to my house a few minutes before I reached it, in great distress of mind, saying that his child had been seized with fever, and had become de lirious. Hearing that I was at the mayor's house, he had hurried thither in search of me.

I felt as if it were almost a relief to the troubled and haunting thoughts which tormented me, to be summoned to the exercise of a familiar knowledge. I hastened to the bedside of the little sufferer, and soon forgot all else in the anxious struggle for a human life. The struggle promised to be successful; the worst symptoms began to yield to remedies prompt and energetic, if simple. I remained at the house, rather to comfort and support the parents than because my continued attendance was absolutely needed, till the night was well-nigh gone; and all cause of immediate danger having subsided, I then found myself once more in the streets. An atmosphere palely clear in the gray of dawn had succeeded to the thunder-clouds of the

stormy night; the street-lamps, here and there, burned wan and still. I was walking slowly and wearily, so tired out that I was scarcely conscious of my own thoughts, when in a narrow lane, my feet stopped almost mechanically before a human form stretched at full length in the centre of the road, right in my path. The form was dark in the shadow thrown from the neighboring houses. "Some poor drunkard," thought I, and the humanity inseparable from my calling not allowng me to leave a fellow-creature thus exposed to the risk of being run over by the first drowsy wagoner who might pass along the thoroughfare, I stooped to rouse and to lift the form. What was my horror when my eyes met the rigid stare of a dead man's. I started, looked again; it was the face of Sir Philip Derval! He was lying on his back, the countenance upturned, a dark stream oozing from the breast—murdered by two ghastly wounds—murdered not long since; the blood was still warm. Stunned and terror-stricken, I stood bending over the body. Suddenly I was touched on the shoulder.

"Hollo! what is this!" said a gruff voice.

"Murder!" I answered in hollow accents, which sounded strangely to my own ear.

"Murder! so it seems." And the policeman who had thus accosted me lifted the body.

"A gentleman by his dress. How did this happen? How did you come here?" and the policeman glanced suspiciously at me.

At this moment, however, here came up another policeman, in whom I recognized the young man whose sister I had attended and cured.

"Dr. Fenwick," said the last, lifting his hat respectfully, and at the sound of my name his fellow-policeman changed his manner, and muttered an apology.

I now collected myself sufficiently to state the name and rank of the murdered man. The policeman bore the body to their station, to which I accompanied them. I then returned to my own house, and had scarcely sunk on my bed when sleep came over me. But what a sleep! Never till then had I known how awfully distinct dreams can be. The phantasmagoria of the naturalist's collection revived. Life again awoke in the serpent and the tiger, the scorpion moved, and the vulture flapped its wing. And there was Margrave, and there Sir Philip; but their position of power was reversed. And Margrave's foot was on the breast of the dead man. Still I slept on till I was roused by the summons to attend on Mr. Vigors, the magistrate to whom the police had reported the murder.

I dressed hastily and went forth. As I passed through the street, I found that the dismal news had already spread. I was accosted on my way to the magistrate by a hundred eager, tremulous, inquiring tongues.

The scanty evidence I could impart was soon given.

My introduction to Sir Philip at the mayor's house, our accidental meeting under the arch, my discovery of the corpse some hours afterwards on my return from my patient, my professional belief that the deed must have been done a very short time, perhaps but a few minutes, before I chanced upon its victim. But, in that case, how account for the long interval that had elapsed between the time in which I had left Sir Philip under the arch, and the time in which the murder must have been committed? Sir Philip could not have been wandering through the streets all those hours. This doubt, however, was easily and speedily cleared up. A Mr. Jeeves, who was one of the principal solicitors in the town, stated that he had acted as Sir Philip's legal agent and adviser ever since Sir Philip came of age, and was charged with the exclusive management of some valuable house property which the deceased had possessed in L——; that when Sir Philip had arrived in the town late in the afternoon of the previous day, he had sent for Mr. Jeeves; informed him that he, Sir Philip, was engaged to be married; that he wished to have full and minute information as to the details of his house property (which had greatly increased in value since his absence from England), in connection with the settlements his marriage would render necessary: and that this information was also required by him in respect to a codicil he desired to add to his will.

He had, accordingly, requested Mr. Jeeves to have all the books and statements concerning the property ready for his inspection that night, when he would call, after leaving the ball which he had promised the mayor, whom he had accidentally met on entering the town, to attend. Sir Philip had also asked Mr. Jeeves to detain one of his clerks in his office, in order to serve, conjointly with Mr. Jeeves, as a witness to the codicil he desired to add to his will. Sir Philip had accordingly come to Mr. Jeeves's house a little before midnight; had gone carefully through all the statements prepared for him, and had executed the fresh codicil to his testament, which testament he had in their previous interview given to Mr. Jeeves's care sealed up. Mr. Jeeves stated that Sir Philip, though a man of remarkable talents and great acquirements, was extremely eccentric, and of a very peremptory temper, and that the importance attached

to a promptitude for which there seemed no pressing occasion, did not surprise him in Sir Philip as it might have done in an ordinary client. Sir Philip said, indeed, that he should devote the next morning to the draft for his wedding settlements, according to the information of his property which he had acquired; and after a visit of very brief duration to Derval Court, should quit the neighborhood and return to Paris, where his intended bride then was, and in which city it had been settled that the marriage ceremony should take place.

Mr. Jeeves had, however, observed to him, that if he were so soon to be married, it was better to postpone any revision of testamentary bequests, since after marriage he would have to make a new will altogether.

And Sir Philip had simply answered:

"Life is uncertain; who can be sure of the morrow?"

Sir Philip's visit to Mr. Jeeves's house had lasted some hours, for the conversation between them had branched off from actual business to various topics. Mr. Jeeves had not noticed the hour when Sir Philip went; he could only say that as he attended him to the street-door, he observed, rather to his own surprise, that it was close upon daybreak.

Sir Philip's body had been found not many yards distant from the hotel at which he had put up, and to which, therefore, he was evidently returning when he left Mr. Jeeves: an old-fashioned hotel, which had been the principal one at L—— when Sir Philip left England, though now outrivalled by the new and more central establishment in which Margrave was domiciled.

The primary and natural supposition was that Sir Philip had been murdered for the sake of plunder; and this supposition was borne out by the fact to which his valet deposed, viz:

That Sir Philip had about his person, on going to the mayor's house, a purse containing notes and sovereigns; and this purse was now missing.

The valet, who, though an Albanian, spoke English fluently, said that the purse had a gold clasp, on which Sir Philip's crest and initials were engraved. Sir Philip's watch was, however, not taken.

And now, it was not without a quick beat of the heart that I heard the valet declare that a steel casket, to which Sir Philip attached extraordinary value and always carried about with him, was also missing.

The Albanian described this casket as of ancient Byzantine workmanship, opening with a peculiar spring, only known to

Sir Philip, in whose possession it had been, so far as the servant knew, about three years; when, after a visit to Aleppo, in which the servant had not accompanied him, he had first observed it in his master's hands. He was asked if this casket contained articles to account for the value Sir Philip set on it—such as jewels, banknotes, letters of credit, etc. The man replied that it might possibly do so; he had never been allowed the opportunity of examining its contents; but that he was certain the casket held medicines, for he had seen Sir Philip take from it some small phials, by which he had performed great cures in the East, and especially during a pestilence which had visited Damascus, just after Sir Philip had arrived at that city on quitting Aleppo. Almost every European traveller is supposed to be a physician; and Sir Philip was a man of great benevolence, and the servant firmly believed him also to be of great medical skill. After this statement, it was very naturally and generally conjectured that Sir Philip was an amateur disciple of homœopathy, and that the casket contained the phials or globules in use among homœopathists.

Whether or not Mr. Vigors enjoyed a vindictive triumph in making me feel the weight of his authority, or whether his temper was ruffled in the excitement of so grave a case, I cannot say, but his manner was stern and his tone discourteous in the questions which he addressed to me. Nor did the questions themselves seem very pertinent to the object of investigation.

"Pray, Dr. Fenwick," said he, knitting his brows, and fixing his eyes on me rudely, "did Sir Philip Derval, in his conversation with you, mention the steel casket which it seems he carried about with him?"

I felt my countenance change slightly as I answered "Yes."

"Did he tell you what it contained?"

"He said it contained secrets."

"Secrets of what nature? Medicinal or chemical? Secrets which a physician might be curious to learn and covetous to possess?"

This question seemed to me so offensively significant that it roused my indignation, and I answered haughtily, that "a physician of any degree of merited reputation did not much believe in, and still less covet, those secrets in his art which were the boast of quacks and pretenders."

"My question need not offend you, Dr. Fenwick. I put it in another shape: Did Sir Philip Derval so boast of the secrets

contained in his casket, that a quack or pretender might deem such secrets of use to him?"

"Possibly he might, if he believed in such a boast."

"Humph!—he might if he so believed. I have no more questions to put to you, at present, Dr. Fenwick."

Little of any importance in connection with the deceased, or his murder, transpired in the course of that day's examination and inquiries.

The next day, a gentleman distantly related to the young lady to whom Sir Philip was engaged, and who had been for some time in correspondence with the deceased, arrived at L——. He had been sent for at the suggestion of the Albanian servant, who said that Sir Philip had stayed a day at this gentleman's house in London, on his way to L——, from Dover.

The new-comer, whose name was Danvers, gave a more touching pathos to the horror which the murder had excited. It seemed that the motives which had swayed Sir Philip in the choice of his betrothed were singularly pure and noble. The young lady's father—an intimate college friend—had been visited by a sudden reverse of fortune, which had brought on a fever that proved mortal. He had died some years ago, leaving his only child penniless, and had bequeathed her to the care and guardianship of Sir Philip.

The orphan received her education at a convent near Paris; and when Sir Philip, a few weeks since, arrived in that city from the East, he offered her his hand and fortune.

"I know," said Mr. Danvers, "from the conversation I held with him when he came to me in London, that he was induced to this offer by the conscientious desire to discharge the trust consigned to him by his old friend. Sir Philip was still of an age that could not permit him to take under his own roof a female ward of eighteen, without injury to her good name. He could only get over that difficulty by making the ward his wife. 'She will be safer and happier with the man she will love and honor for her father's sake,' said the chivalrous gentleman, 'than she will be under any other roof I could find for her.'"

And now there arrived another stranger to L——, sent for by Mr. Jeeves, the lawyer—a stranger to L——, but not to me; my old Edinburgh acquaintance, Richard Strahan.

The will in Mr. Jeeves's keeping, with its recent codicil, was opened and read. The will itself bore date about six years anterior to the testator's tragic death: it was very short, and, with the exception of a few legacies, of which the most impor-

tant was ten thousand pounds to his ward, the whole of his property was left to Richard Strahan, on the condition that he took the name and arms of Derval within a year from the date of Sir Philip's decease. The codicil, added to the will the night before his death, increased the legacy to the young lady from ten to thirty thousand pounds, and bequeathed an annuity of one hundred pounds a year to his Albanian servant. Accompanying the will, and within the same envelope, was a sealed letter, addressed to Richard Strahan, and dated at Paris two weeks before Sir Philip's decease. Strahan brought that letter to me. It ran thus: "Richard Strahan, I advise you to pull down the house called Derval Court, and to build another on a better site, the plans of which, to be modified according to your own taste and requirements, will be found among my papers. This is a recommendation, not a command. But I strictly enjoin you entirely to demolish the more ancient part, which was chiefly occupied by myself, and to destroy by fire, without perusal, all the books and manuscripts found in the safes in my study. I have appointed you my sole executor, as well as my heir, because I have no personal friends in whom I can confide as I trust I may do in the man I have never seen, simply because he will bear my name and represent my lineage. There will be found in my writing-desk, which always accompanies me in my travels, an autobiographical work, a record of my own life, comprising discoveries, or hints at discovery, in science, through means little cultivated in our age. You will not be surprised that before selecting you as my heir and executor, from a crowd of relations not more distant, I should have made inquiries in order to justify my selection. The result of those inquiries informs me that you have not yourself the peculiar knowledge nor the habits of mind that could enable you to judge of matters which demand the attainments and the practice of science; but that you are of an honest, affectionate nature, and will regard as sacred the last injunctions of a benefactor. I enjoin you, then, to submit the aforesaid manuscript memoir to some man on whose character for humanity and honor you can place confidential reliance, and who is accustomed to the study of the positive sciences, more especially chemistry, in connection with electricity and magnetism. My desire is that he shall edit and arrange this memoir for publication; and that, wherever he feels a conscientious doubt whether any discovery, or hint of discovery, therein contained, would not prove more dangerous than useful to mankind, he shall consult with any other three men of science

whose names are a guarantee for probity and knowledge, and according to the best of his judgment, after such consultation, suppress or publish the passage of which he has so doubted. I own the ambition which first directed me towards studies of a very unusual character, and which has encouraged me in their pursuit through many years of voluntary exile, in lands where they could be best facilitated or aided—the ambition of leaving behind me the renown of a bold discoverer in those recesses of nature which philosophy has hitherto abandoned to superstition. But I feel, at the moment in which I trace these lines, a fear lest, in the absorbing interest of researches which tend to increase to a marvellous degree the power of man over all matter, animate or inanimate, I may have blunted my own moral perceptions; and that there may be much in the knowledge which I sought and acquired from the pure desire of investigating hidden truths, that could be more abused to purposes of tremendous evil than be likely to conduce to benignant good. And of this a mind disciplined to severe reasoning, and uninfluenced by the enthusiasm which has probably obscured my own judgment, should be the unprejudiced arbiter. Much as I have coveted and still do covet that fame which makes the memory of one man the common inheritance of all, I would infinitely rather that my name should pass away with my breath, than that I should transmit to my fellow-men any portion of a knowledge which the good might forbear to exercise and the bad might unscrupulously pervert. I bear about with me, wherever I wander, a certain steel casket. I received this casket, with its contents, from a man whose memory I hold in profound veneration. Should I live to find a person whom, after minute and intimate trial of his character, I should deem worthy of such confidence, it is my intention to communicate to him the secret how to prepare and how to use such of the powders and essences stored within that casket as I myself have ventured to employ. Others I have never tested nor do I know how they could be re-supplied if lost or wasted. But as the contents of this casket, in the hands of any one not duly instructed as to the mode of applying them, would either be useless, or conduce, through inadvertent and ignorant misapplication, to the most dangerous consequences,—so, if I die without having found, and in writing named, such a confidant as I have described above, I command you immediately to empty all the powders and essences found therein into any running stream of water, which will at once harmlessly dissolve them. On no account must they be cast into fire!

"This letter, Richard Strahan, will only come under your eyes in case the plans and the hopes which I have formed for my earthly future should be frustrated by the death on which I do not calculate, but against the chances of which this will and this letter provide. I am about to revisit England, in defiance of a warning that I shall be there subjected to some peril which I refuse to have defined, because I am unwilling that any mean apprehension of personal danger should enfeeble my nerves in the discharge of a stern and solemn duty. If I overcome that peril, you will not be my heir; my testament will be remodelled; this letter will be recalled and destroyed. I shall form ties which promise me the happiness I have never hitherto found, though it is common to all men—the affections of home, the caresses of children, among whom I may find one to whom hereafter I may bequeath, in my knowledge, a far nobler heritage than my lands. In that case, however, my first care would be to assure your own fortunes. And the sum which this codicil assures to my betrothed would be transferrred to yourself on my wedding-day. Do you know why, never having seen you, I thus select you for preference to all my other kindred?—why my heart, in writing thus, warms to your image? Richard Strahan, your only sister, many years older than yourself—you were then a child—was the object of my first love. We were to have been wedded, for her parents deceived me into the belief that she returned my affection. With a rare and noble candor, she herself informed me that her heart was given to another, who possessed not my worldly gifts of wealth and station. In resigning my claims to her hand, I succeeded in propitiating her parents to her own choice. I obtained for her husband the living which he held, and I settled on your sister the dower which, at her death, passed to you as the brother to whom she had shown a mother's love, and the interest of which has secured you a modest independence.

"If these lines ever reach you, recognize my title to reverential obedience to commands which may seem to you wild, perhaps irrational; and repay, as if a debt due from your own lost sister, the affection I have borne to you for her sake."

While I read this long and strange letter, Strahan sat by my side, covering his face with his hands, and weeping with honest tears for the man whose death had made him powerful and rich.

"You will undertake the trust ordained to me in this letter," said he, struggling to compose himself. "You will read and edit this memoir; you are the very man he himself would have

selected. Of your honor and humanity there can be no doubt, and you have studied with success the sciences which he specifies as requisite for the discharge of the task he commands."

At this request, though I could not be wholly unprepared for it, my first impulse was that of a vague terror. It seemed to me as if I were becoming more and more entangled in a mysterious and fatal web. But this impulse soon faded in the eager yearnings of an ardent and irresistible curiosity.

I promised to read the manuscript, and in order that I might fully imbue my mind with the object and wish of the deceased, I asked leave to make a copy of the letter I had just read. To this Strahan readily assented, and that copy I have transcribed in the preceding pages.

I asked Strahan if he had yet found the manuscript; he said, "No, he had not yet had the heart to inspect the papers left by the deceased. He would now do so. He should go in a day or two to Derval Court, and reside there till the murderer was discovered, as doubtless he soon must be through the vigilance of the police. Not till that discovery was made should Sir Philip's remains, though already placed in their coffin, be consigned to the family vault."

Strahan seemed to have some superstitious notion that the murderer might be more secure from justice if his victim were thrust, unavenged, into the tomb.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE belief prevalent in the town ascribed the murder of Sir Philip to the violence of some vulgar robber, probably not an inhabitant of L——. Mr. Vigors did not favor that belief. He intimated an opinion, which seemed extravagant and groundless, that Sir Philip had been murdered, for the sake not of the missing purse, but of the missing casket. It was currently believed that the solemn magistrate had consulted one of his pretended clairvoyants, and that this impostor had gulled him with assurances, to which he attached a credit that perverted into egregiously absurd directions his characteristic activity and zeal.

Be that as it may, the coroner's inquest closed without casting any light on so mysterious a tragedy.

What were my own conjectures I scarcely dared to admit—I certainly could not venture to utter them. But my suspicions centred upon Margrave. That for some reason or other

he had cause to dread Sir Philip's presence in L—— was clear, even to my reason. And how could my reason reject all the influences which had been brought to bear on my imagination, whether by the scene in the museum or my conversation with the deceased? But it was impossible to act on such suspicions—impossible even to confide them. Could I have told to any man the effect produced on me in the museum, he would have considered me a liar or a madman. And in Sir Philip's accusations against Margrave, there was nothing tangible—nothing that could bear repetition. Those accusations, if analyzed, vanished into air. What did they imply? That Margrave was a magician, a monstrous prodigy, a creature exceptional to the ordinary conditions of humanity. Would the most reckless of mortals have ventured to bring against the worst of characters such a charge, on the authority of a deceased witness, and to found on evidence so fantastic the awful accusation of murder. But of all men, certainly I, a sober, practical physician, was the last whom the public could excuse for such incredible implications—and certainly, of all men, the last against whom any suspicion of heinous crime would be readily entertained was that joyous youth in whose sunny aspect life and conscience alike seemed to keep careless holiday. But I could not overcome, nor did I attempt to reason against, the horror akin to detestation, that had succeeded to the fascinating attraction by which Margrave had before conciliated a liking founded rather on admiration than esteem.

In order to avoid his visits I kept away from the study in which I had habitually spent my mornings, and to which he had been accustomed to so ready an access. And if he called at the front door, I directed my servant to tell him that I was either from home or engaged. He did attempt for the first few days to visit me as before, but when my intention to shun him became thus manifest, desisted; naturally enough, as any other man so pointedly repelled would have done.

I abstained from all those houses in which I was likely to meet him; and went my professional round of visits in a close carriage; so that I might not be accosted by him in his walks.

One morning a very few days after Strahan had shown me Sir Philip Derval's letter, I received a note from my old college acquaintance stating that he was going to Derval Court that afternoon; that he should take with him the memoir which he had found, and begging me to visit him at his new home the next day, and commence my inspection of the manuscript. I consented eagerly.

That morning, on going my round, my carriage passed by another drawn up to the pavement, and I recognized the figure of Margrave standing beside the vehicle, and talking to some one seated within it. I looked back, as my own carriage whirled rapidly by, and saw with uneasiness and alarm that it was Richard Strahan to whom Margrave was thus familiarly addressing himself. How had the two made acquaintance? Was it not an outrage on Sir Philip Derval's memory, that the heir he had selected should be thus apparently intimate with the man whom he had so sternly denounced? I became still more impatient to read the memoir; in all probability it would give such explanations with respect to Margrave's antecedents, as, if not sufficing to criminate him of legal offences, would at least effectually terminate any acquaintance between Sir Philip's successor and himself.

All my thoughts were, however, diverted to channels of far deeper interest even than those in which my mind had of late been so tumultuously whirled along, when, on returning home, I found a note from Mrs. Ashleigh. She and Lilian had just come back to L——, sooner than she had led me to anticipate. Lilian had not seemed quite well the last day or two, and had been anxious to return.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Let me recall it—softly—softly! Let me recall that evening spent with her!—that evening, the last before darkness rose between us like a solid wall.

It was evening at the close of summer. The sun had set, the twilight was lingering still. We were in the old monastic garden—garden so quiet, so cool, so fragrant. She was seated on a bench under the one great cedar-tree that rose sombre in the midst of the grassy lawn with its little paradise of flowers. I had thrown myself on the sward at her feet; her hand so confidingly lay in the clasp of mine. I see her still—how young, how fair, how innocent!

Strange, strange! So inexpressibly English; so thoroughly the creature of our sober, homely life! The pretty, delicate white robe that I touch so timorously, and the ribbon-knots of blue that so well become the soft color of the fair cheek, the wavy silk of the brown hair! She is murmuring low her answer to my trembling question.

"As well as when last we parted? Do you love me as well still?"

"There is no 'still' written here," said she, softly pressing her hand to her heart. "Yesterday is as to-morrow in the Forever."

"Ah, Lilian! if I could reply to you in words akin to poetry as your own."

"Fie! you who affect not to care for poetry!"

"That was before you went away—before I missed you from my eyes, from my life—before I was quite conscious how precious you were to me, more precious than common words can tell! Yes, there is one period in love when all men are poets, however the penury of their language may belie the luxuriance of their fancies. What would become of me if you ceased to love me?"

"Or of me, if you could cease to love?"

"And somehow it seems to me this evening as if my heart drew nearer to you—nearer as if for shelter."

"It is sympathy," said she, with tremulous eagerness; "that sort of mysterious sympathy which I have often heard you deny to deride; for I, too, feel drawn nearer to you, as if there were a storm at hand. I was oppressed by an indescribable terror in returning home, and the moment I saw you there came a sense of protection."

Her head sank on my shoulder; we were silent some moments; then we both rose by the same involuntary impulse, and round her slight form I twined my strong arm of man. And now we are winding slow under the lilacs and acacias that belt the lawn. Lilian has not yet heard of the murder, which forms the one topic of the town, for all tales of violence and blood affected her as they affect a fearful child. Mrs. Ashleigh, therefore, had judiciously concealed from her the letters and the journals by which the dismal news had been carried to herself. I need scarcely say that the grim subject was not broached by me. In fact, my own mind escaped from the events which had of late so perplexed and tormented it; the tranquillity of the scene, the bliss of Lilian's presence, had begun to chase away even that melancholy foreboding which had overshadowed me in the first moments of our reunion. So we came gradually to converse of the future—of the day, not far distant, when we two should be as one. We planned our bridal excursion. We would visit the scenes endeared to her by song, to me by childhood—the bank and waves of my native Windermere—our one brief holiday before life returned to

labor, and hearts now so disquieted by hope and joy settled down to the calm serenity of home.

As we thus talked, the moon, nearly rounded to her full, rose amidst skies without a cloud. We paused to gaze on her solemn, haunting beauty, as where are the lovers who have not paused to gaze? We were then on the terrace walk, which commanded a view of the town below. Before us was a parapet wall, low on the garden side, but inaccessible on the outer side, forming part of a straggling, irregular street that made one of the boundaries dividing Abbey Hill from Low Town. The lamps of the thoroughfares, in many a line and row beneath us, stretched far away, obscured, here and there, by intervening roofs and tall church towers. The hum of the city came to our ears, low and mellowed into a lulling sound. It was not displeasing to be reminded that there was a world without, as close and closer we drew each to each—worlds to one another! Suddenly, there carolled forth the song of a human voice—a wild, irregular, half-savage melody—foreign, uncomprehended words—air and words not new to me. I recognized the voice and chant of Margrave. I started, and uttered an angry exclamation.

"Hush!" whispered Lilian, and I felt her frame shiver within my encircling arm. "Hush! listen! Yes; I have heard that voice before—last night—"

"Last night! you were not here; you were more than a hundred miles away."

"I heard it in a dream! Hush, hush!"

The song rose louder; impossible to describe its effect, in the midst of the tranquil night, chiming over the serried roof-tops, and under the solitary moon. It was not like the artful song of man, for it was defective in the methodical harmony of tune; it was not like the song of the wild bird, for it had no monotony in its sweetness: it was wandering and various as the sounds from an Æolian harp. But it affected the senses to a powerful degree, as in remote lands and in vast solitudes I have since found the note of the mocking-bird, suddenly heard, affect the listener half with delight, half with awe, as if some demon creature of the desert were mimicking man for its own merriment. The chant now had changed into an air of defying glee, of menacing exultation; it might have been the triumphant war-song of some antique barbarian race. The note was sinister; a shadow passed through me, and Lilian had closed her eyes, and was sighing heavily; then with a rapid change, sweet as the coo with which an Arab mother lulls her

babe to sleep, the melody died away. "There, there, look," murmured Lilian, moving from me, "the same I saw last night in sleep; the same I saw in the space above, on the evening I first knew you!"

Her eyes were fixed, her hand raised; my look followed hers, and rested on the face and form of Margrave. The moon shone full upon him, so full as if concentrating all its light upon his image. The place on which he stood (a balcony to the upper story of a house about fifty yards distant) was considerably above the level of the terrace from which we gazed on him. His arms were folded on his breast, and he appeared to be looking straight towards us. Even at that distance, the lustrous youth of his countenance appeared to me terribly distinct, and the light of his wondrous eye seemed to rest upon us in one lengthened, steady ray through the limpid moonshine. Involuntarily I seized Lilian's hand, and drew her away almost by force, for she was unwilling to move, and as I led her back, she turned her head to look round; I too, turned in jealous rage! I breathed more freely. Margrave had disappeared!

"How came he there? It is not his hotel. Whose house is it?" I said aloud, though speaking to myself.

Lilian remained silent; her eyes fixed upon the ground as in deep revery. I took her hand; it did not return my pressure. I felt cut to the heart when she drew coldly from me that hand, till then so frankly cordial. I stopped short; "Lilian, what is this? You are chilled towards me. Can the mere sound of that man's voice, the mere glimpse of that man's face, have—"I paused; I did not dare to complete my question.

Lilian lifted her eyes to mine, and I saw at once in those eyes a change. Their look was cold; not haughty, but abstracted. "I do not understand you," she said, in a weary, listless accent. "It is growing late; I must go in."

So we walked on moodily, no longer arm in arm, nor hand in hand. Then it occurred to me that, the next day, Lilian would be in that narrow world of society; that there she could scarcely fail to hear of Margrave, to meet, to know him. Jealousy seized me with all its imaginary terrors, and, amidst that jealousy, a nobler, purer apprehension for herself. Had I been Lilian's brother instead of her betrothed, I should not have trembled less to foresee the shadow of Margrave's mysterious influence passing over a mind so predisposed to the charm which Mystery itself has for those whose thoughts fuse their outlines in fancies—whose world melts away into Dreamland. Therefore I spoke.

"Lilian, at the risk of offending you—alas! I have never done so before this night—I must address to you a prayer which I implore you not to regard as the dictate of a suspicion unworthy you and myself. The person whom you have just heard and seen is, at present, much courted in the circles of this town. I entreat you not to permit any one to introduce him to you. I entreat you not to know him. I cannot tell you all my reasons for this petition; enough that I pledge you my honor that those reasons are grave. Trust, then, in my truth, as I trust in yours. Be assured that I stretch not the rights which your heart has bestowed upon mine in the promise I ask, as I shall be freed from all fear by a promise which I know will be sacred when once it is given."

"What promise?" asked Lilian absently, as if she had not heard my words.

"What promise? Why, to refuse all acquaintance with that man; his name is Margrave. Promise me, dearest, promise me."

"Why is your voice so changed?" said Lilian. "Its tone jars on my ear," she added, with a peevishness so unlike her, that it startled me more than it offended; and without a word further, she quickened her pace, and entered the house.

For the rest of the evening we were both taciturn and distant towards each other. In vain Mrs. Ashleigh kindly sought to break down our mutual reserve. I felt that I had the right to be resentful, and I clung to that right the more because Lilian made no attempt at reconciliation. This, too, was wholly unlike herself, for her temper was ordinarily sweet—sweet to the extreme of meekness; saddened if the slightest misunderstanding between us had ever vexed me, and yearning to ask forgiveness if a look or a word had pained me. I was in hopes, that, before I went away, peace between us would be restored. But long ere her usual hour for retiring to rest she rose abruptly, and, complaining of fatigue and headache, wished me good-night, and avoided the hand I sorrowfully held out to her as I opened the door.

"You must have been very unkind to poor Lilian," said Mrs. Ashleigh, between jest and earnest, "for I never saw her so cross to you before. And the first day of her return, too!"

"The fault is not mine," said I, somewhat sullenly; "I did but ask Lilian, and that as a humble prayer, not to make the acquaintance of a stranger in this town against whom I have reasons for distrust and aversion. I know not why that prayer should displease her."

"Nor I. Who is the stranger?"

"A person who calls himself Margrave. Let me at least entreat you to avoid him!"

"Oh, I have no desire to make acquaintance with strangers. But, now Lilian is gone, do tell me all about this dreadful murder? The servants are full of it, and I cannot keep it long concealed from Lilian. I was in hopes that you would have broken it to her."

I rose impatiently; I could not bear to talk thus of an event the tragedy of which was associated in my mind with circumstances so mysterious. I became agitated and even angry when Mrs. Ashleigh persisted in rambling, woman-like inquiries: "Who was suspected of the deed? Who did I think had committed it? What sort of a man was Sir Philip? What was that strange story about a casket?" Breaking from such interrogations, to which I could give but abrupt and evasive answers, I seized my hat, and took my departure.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LETTER FROM ALLEN FENWICK TO LILIAN ASHLEIGH.

"I HAVE promised to go to Derval Court to-day, and shall not return till to-morrow. I cannot bear the thought that so many hours should pass away with one feeling less kind than usual resting like a cloud upon you and me. Lilian, if I offended you, forgive me! Send me one line to say so!—one line which I can place next to my heart and cover with grateful kisses till we meet again!"

REPLY.

"I scarcely know what you mean, nor do I quite understand my own state of mind at this moment. It cannot be that I love you less—and yet—but I will not write more now. I feel glad that we shall not meet for the next day or so, and then I hope to be quite recovered. I am not well at this moment. Do not ask me to forgive you—but if it is I who am in fault—forgive me, oh forgive me, Allen."

And with this unsatisfactory note—not worn next to my heart, not covered with kisses, but thrust crumpled into my desk like a creditor's unwelcome bill, I flung myself on my horse and rode to Derval Court. I am naturally proud; my pride came now to my aid. I felt bitterly indignant against Lilian—so indignant that I resolved on my return to say to

her, "If in those words, 'And yet,' you implied a doubt whether you loved me less, I cancel your vows, I give you back your freedom." And I could have passed from her threshold with a firm foot, though with the certainty that I should never smile again.

Does her note seem to you who may read these pages to justify such resentment? Perhaps not. But there is an atmosphere in the letters of the one we love, which we alone—we who love—can feel, and in the atmosphere of that letter I felt the chill of the coming winter.

I reached the park lodge of Derval Court late in the day. I had occasion to visit some patients whose houses lay scattered many miles apart, and for that reason, as well as from the desire for some quick bodily exercise which is so natural an effect of irritable perturbation of mind, I had made the journey on horseback instead of using a carriage, that I could not have got through the lanes and field-paths by which alone the work set to myself could be accomplished in time.

Just as I entered the park, an uneasy thought seized hold of me with the strength which is ascribed to presentiments. I had passed through my study (which has been so elaborately described) to my stables, as I generally did when I wanted my saddle-horse, and, in so doing, had, doubtless, left open the gate to the iron palisade, and probably the window of the study itself. I had been in this careless habit for several years, without ever once having cause for self-reproach. As I before said, there was nothing in my study to tempt a thief; the study shut out from the body of the house, and the servant sure at nightfall both to close the window and lock the gate; yet now, for the first time, I felt an impulse, urgent, keen, and disquieting, to ride back to the town and see those precautions taken. I could not guess why, but something whispered to me that my neglect had exposed me to some great danger. I even checked my horse and looked at my watch; too late!—already just on the stroke of Strahan's dinner-hour as fixed in his note; my horse, too, was fatigued and spent: besides, what folly! What bearded man can believe in the warnings of a "presentiment"? I pushed on, and soon halted before the old-fashioned flight of stairs that led up to the hall. Here I was accosted by the old steward; he had just descended the stairs, and, as I dismounted, he thrust his arm into mine unceremoniously, and drew me a little aside.

"Doctor, I was right; it *was* his ghost that I saw by the iron door of the mausoleum. I saw it again at the same place last

night, but I had no fit then. Justice on his murderer! Blood for blood!"

"Ay!" said I sternly; for if I suspected Margrave before, I felt convinced now that the inexpiable deed was his. Wherefore convinced? Simply because I now hated him more, and hate is so easily convinced! "Lilian! Lilian!" I murmured to myself that name; the flame of my hate was fed by my jealousy. "Ay!" said I sternly, "murder will out."

"What are the police about?" said the old man querulously; "days pass on days, and no nearer the truth. But what does the new owner care? He has the rents and acres; what does he care for the dead? I will never serve another master. I have just told Mr. Strahan so. How do I know whether he did not do the deed? Who else had an interest in it?"

"Hush, hush!" I cried; "you do not know how wildly you are talking."

The old man stared at me, shook his head, released my arm, and strode away.

A laboring man came out of the garden, and having unbuckled the saddle-bags, which contained the few things required for so short a visit, I consigned my horse to his care, and ascended the perron. The old housekeeper met me in the hall, conducted me up the great staircase, showed me into a bedroom prepared for me, and told me that Mr. Strahan was already waiting dinner for me. I should find him in the study. I hastened to join him. He began apologizing, very unnecessarily, for the state of his establishment. He had, as yet, engaged no new servants. The housekeeper, with the help of a housemaid, did all the work.

Richard Strahan at college had been as little distinguishable from other young men as a youth neither rich nor poor, neither clever nor stupid, neither handsome nor ugly, neither audacious sinner nor formal saint, possibly could be.

Yet, to those who understood him well, he was not without some of those moral qualities by which a youth of mediocre intellect often matures into a superior man.

He was, as Sir Philip had been rightly informed, thoroughly honest and upright. But with a strong sense of duty, there was also a certain latent hardness. He was not indulgent. He had outward frankness with acquaintances, but was easily roused to suspicion. He had much of the thriftiness and self-denial of the North countryman, and I have no doubt that he had lived with calm content and systematic economy on an income which made him, as a bachelor, independent of his nom-

inal profession, but would not have sufficed, in itself, for the fitting maintenance of a wife and family. He was, therefore, still single.

It seemed to me, even during the few minutes in which we conversed before dinner was announced, that his character showed a new phase with his new fortunes. He talked in a grandiose style of the duties of station and the woes of wealth. He seemed to be very much afraid of spending, and still more appalled at the idea of being cheated. His temper, too, was ruffled; the steward had given him notice to quit. Mr. Jeeves, who had spent the morning with him, had said the steward would be a great loss, and a steward, at once sharp and honest, was not to be easily found.

What trifles can embitter the possession of great goods! Strahan had taken a fancy to the old house; it was comfortable to his notions, both of comfort and pomp, and Sir Philip had expressed a desire that the old house should be pulled down. Strahan had inspected the plans for the new mansion to which Sir Philip had referred, and the plans did not please him; on the contrary, they terrified.

"Jeeves says that I could not build such a house under seventy or eighty thousand pounds, and then it will require twice the establishment which will suffice for this. I shall be ruined," cried the man who had just come into possession of at least ten thousand a year.

"Sir Philip did not enjoin you to pull down the old house; he only advised you to do so. Perhaps he thought the site less healthy than that which he proposes for a new building, or was aware of some other drawback to the house, which you may discover later. Wait a little and see before deciding."

"But, at all events, I suppose I must pull down this curious old room—the nicest part of the whole house!"

Strahan, as he spoke, looked wistfully round at the quaint oak chimney-piece; the carved ceiling; the well-built solid walls, with the large mullion casement, opening so pleasantly on the sequestered gardens. He had ensconced himself in Sir Philip's study, the chamber in which the once famous mystic, Forman, had found a refuge.

"So cozy a room for a single man!" sighed Strahan. "Near the stables and dog-kennels, too! But I suppose I must pull it down. I am not bound to do so legally; it is no condition of the will. But in honor and gratitude I ought not to disobey poor Sir Philip's positive injunction."

"Of that," said I gravely, "there cannot be a doubt."

Here our conversation was interrupetd by Mrs. Gates, who informed us that dinner was served in the library. Wine of great age was brought from the long-neglected cellars; Strahan filled and refilled his glass, and, warmed into hilarity, began to talk of bringing old college friends around him in the winter season, and making the rooftree ring with laughter and song once more.

Time wore away, and night had long set in, when Strahan at last rose from the table, his speech thick and his tongue unsteady. We returned to the study, and I reminded my host of the special object of my visit to him, viz., the inspection of Sir Philip's manuscript.

"It is tough reading," said Strahan; "better put it off till to-morrow. You will stay here two or three days."

"No; I must return to L—— to-morrow. I cannot absent myself from my patients. And it is the more desirable that no time should be lost before examining the contents of the manuscript, because probably they may give some clue to the detection of the murderer."

"Why do you think that?" cried Strahan, startled from the drowsiness that was creeping over him.

"Because the manuscript may show that Sir Philip had some enemy—and who but an enemy could have had a motive for such a crime? Come, bring forth the book. You of all men are bound to be alert in every research that may guide the retribution of justice to the assassin of your benefactor."

"Yes, yes. I will offer a reward of five thousand pounds for the discovery. Allen, that wretched old steward had the insolence to tell me that I was the only man in the world who could have an interest in the death of his master; and he looked at me as if he thought that I had committed the crime. You are right; it becomes me, of all men, to be alert. The assassin must be found. He must hang."

While thus speaking, Strahan had risen, unlocked a desk which stood on one of the safes, and drawn forth a thick volume, the contents of which were protected by a clasp and lock. Strahan proceeded to open this lock by one of a bunch of keys, which he said had been found on Sir Philip's person.

"There, Allen, this is the memoir. I need not tell you what store I place on it; not, between you and me, that I expect it will warrant poor Sir Philip's high opinion of his own scientific discoveries. That part of his letter seems to me very queer, and very flighty. But he evidently set his heart on

the publication of his work, in part if not in whole. And, naturally, I must desire to comply with a wish so distinctly intimated by one to whom I owe so much. I beg you, therefore, not to be too fastidious. Some valuable hints in medicine, I have reason to believe, the manuscript will contain, and those may help you in your profession, Allen."

"You have reason to believe! Why?"

"Oh, a charming young fellow, who, with most of the other gentry resident at L——, called on me at my hotel, told me that he had travelled in the East, and had there heard much of Sir Philip's knowledge of chemistry, and the cures it had enabled him to perform."

"You speak of Mr. Margrave. He called on you?"

"Yes."

"You did not, I trust, mention to him the existence of Sir Philip's manuscript."

"Indeed I did; and I said you had promised to examine it. He seemed delighted at that, and spoke most highly of your peculiar fitness for the task."

"Give me the manuscript," said I abruptly, "and, after I have looked at it to-night, I may have something to say to you to-morrow in reference to Mr. Margrave."

"There is the book," said Strahan; "I have just glanced at it, and find much of it written in Latin; and I am ashamed to say that I have so neglected the little Latin I learned in our college days, that I could not construe what I looked at."

I sat down and placed the book before me; Strahan fell into a doze, from which he was wakened by the housekeeper, who brought in the tea-things.

"Well," said Strahan languidly, "do you find much in the book that explains the many puzzling riddles in poor Sir Philip's eccentric life and pursuits?"

"Yes," said I. "Do not interrupt me."

Strahan again began to doze, and the housekeeper asked if we should want anything more that night, and if I thought I could find my way to my bedroom.

I dismissed her impatiently, and continued to read.

Strahan woke up again as the clock struck eleven, and finding me still absorbed in the manuscript, and disinclined to converse, lighted his candle, and telling me to replace the manuscript in the desk when I had done with it, and be sure to lock the desk and take charge of the key, which he took off the bunch and gave me, went upstairs, yawning.

I was alone in the wizard Forman's chamber, and bending

over a stranger record than had ever excited my infant wonder, or, in later years, provoked my sceptic smile.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE manuscript was written in a small and peculiar handwriting, which, though evidently by the same person whose letter to Strahan I had read, was, whether from haste or some imperfection in the ink, much more hard to decipher. Those parts of the Memoir which related to experiments, or alleged secrets in Nature, that the writer intimated a desire to submit exclusively to scholars or men of science, were in Latin—and Latin which, though grammatically correct, was frequently obscure. But all that detained the eye and attention on the page, necessarily served to impress the contents more deeply on remembrance.

The narrative commenced with the writer's sketch of his childhood. Both his parents had died before he attained his seventh year. The orphan had been sent by his guardians to a private school, and his holidays had been passed at Derval Court. Here his earliest reminiscences were those of the quaint old room, in which I now sat, and of his childish wonder at the inscription on the chimney-piece—who and what was the Simon Forman who had there found a refuge from persecution? Of what nature were the studies he had cultivated, and the discoveries he boasted to have made?

When he was about sixteen, Philip Derval had begun to read the many mystic books which the library contained; but without other result on his mind than the sentiment of disappointment and disgust. The impressions produced on the credulous imagination of childhood vanished. He went to the university; was sent abroad to travel: and on his return took that place in the circles of London which is so readily conceded to a young idler of birth and fortune. He passed quickly over that period of his life, as one of extravagance and dissipation, from which he was first drawn by the attachment for his cousin to which his letter to Strahan referred. Disappointed in the hopes which that affection had conceived, and his fortune impaired, partly by some years of reckless profusion, and partly by the pecuniary sacrifices at which he had effected his cousin's marriage with another, he retired to Derval Court, to live there in solitude and seclusion. On searching for some old title-deeds required for a mortgage, he

chanced upon a collection of manuscripts much discolored, and, in part, eaten away by moth or damp. These, on examination, proved to be the writings of Forman. Some of them were astrological observations and predictions; some were upon the nature of the Cabbala; some upon the invocation of spirits and the magic of the dark ages. All had a certain interest, for they were interspersed with personal remarks, anecdotes of eminent actors in a very stirring time, and were composed as Colloquies, in imitation of Erasmus; the second person in the dialogue being Sir Miles Derval, the patron and pupil; the first person being Forman, the philosopher and expounder.

But along with these shadowy lucubrations were treatises of a more uncommon and a more startling character; discussions on various occult laws of nature, and detailed accounts of analytical experiments. These opened a new, and what seemed to Sir Philip a practical, field of inquiry—a true border-land between natural science and imaginative speculation. Sir Philip had cultivated philosophical science at the university; he resumed the study, and tested himself the truth of various experiments suggested by Forman. Some, to his surprise, proved successful, some wholly failed. These lucubrations first tempted the writer of the memoir towards the studies in which the remainder of his life had been consumed. But he spoke of the lucubrations themselves as valuable only where suggestive of some truth which Forman had accidentally approached, without being aware of their true nature and importance. They were debased by absurd puerilities, and vitiated by the vain and presumptuous ignorance which characterized the astrology of the middle ages. For these reasons the writer intimated his intention (if he lived to return to England) to destroy Forman's manuscripts, together with sundry other books, and a few commentaries of his own upon studies which had for a while misled him—all now deposited in the safes of the room in which I sat.

After some years passed in the retirement of Derval Court, Sir Philip was seized with the desire to travel, and the taste he had imbibed for occult studies led him towards those Eastern lands in which they took their origin, and still retain their professors.

Several pages of the manuscript were now occupied with minute statements of the writer's earliest disappointment in the objects of his singular research. The so-called magicians, accessible to the curiosity of European travellers, were either

but ingenious jugglers, or produced effects that perplexed him by practices they had mechanically learned, but of the rationale of which they were as ignorant as himself. It was not till he had resided some considerable time in the East, and acquired a familiar knowledge of its current languages and the social habits of its various populations, that he became acquainted with men in whom he recognized earnest cultivators of the lore which tradition ascribes to the colleges and priesthoods of the ancient world; men generally living remote from others, and seldom to be bribed by money to exhibit their marvels or divulge their secrets. In his intercourse with these sages, Sir Philip arrived at the conviction that there does exist an art of magic, distinct from the guile of the conjuror, and applying to certain latent powers and affinities in nature a philosophy akin to that which we receive in our acknowledged schools, inasmuch as it is equally based upon experiment, and produces from definite causes definite results. In support of this startling proposition, Sir Philip now devoted more than half his volume to the detail of various experiments, to the process and result of which he pledged his guarantee as the actual operator. As most of these alleged experiments appeared to me wholly incredible, and as all of them were unfamiliar to my practical experience, and could only be verified or falsified by tests that would require no inconsiderable amount of time and care, I passed, with little heed, over the pages in which they were set forth. I was impatient to arrive at that part of the manuscript which might throw light on the mystery in which my interest was the keenest. What were the links which connected the existence of Margrave with the history of Sir Philip Derval? Thus hurrying on, page after page, I suddenly, towards the end of the volume, came upon a name that arrested all my intention—Haroun of Aleppo. He who has read the words addressed to me in my trance may well conceive the thrill that shot through my heart when I came upon that name, and will readily understand how much more vividly my memory retains that part of the manuscript to which I now proceed, than all which had gone before.

"It was," wrote Sir Philip, "in an obscure suburb of Aleppo that I at length met with the wonderful man from whom I have acquired a knowledge immeasurably more profound and occult than that which may be tested in the experiments to which I have devoted so large a share of this memoir. Haroun of Aleppo had, indeed, mastered every secret in nature which the nobler, or theurgic, magic seeks to fathom.

"He had discovered the great Principle of Animal Life, which had hitherto baffled the subtlest anatomist; provided only that the great organs were not irreparably destroyed, there was no disease that he could not cure, no decrepitude to which he could not restore vigor; yet his science was based on the same theory as that espoused by the best professional practitioners of medicine, viz., that the true art of healing is to assist nature to throw off the disease—to summon, as it were, the whole system to eject the enemy that has fastened on a part. And thus his processes, though occasionally varying in the means employed, all combined in this, viz., the reinvigorating and recruiting of the principle of life."

No one knew the birth or origin of Haroun; no one knew his age. In outward appearance he was in the strength and prime of mature manhood. But, according to testimonies in which the writer of the memoir expressed a belief that, I need scarcely say, appeared to me egregiously credulous, Haroun's existence under the same name, and known by the same repute, could be traced back to more than a hundred years. He told Sir Philip that he had thrice renewed his own life, and had resolved to do so no more—he had grown weary of living on. With all his gifts, Haroun owned himself to be consumed by a profound melancholy. He complained that there was nothing new to him under the sun; he said that, while he had at his command unlimited wealth, wealth had ceased to bestow enjoyment; and he preferred living as simply as a peasant: he had tired out all the affections and all the passions of the human heart; he was in the universe as in solitude. In a word, Haroun would often repeat, with mournful solemnity, "The soul is not meant to inhabit this earth, and in fleshy tabernacle, for more than the period usually assigned to mortals; and when by art in repairing the walls of the body, we so retain it, the soul repines, becomes inert or dejected." "He only," said Haroun, "would feel continued joy in continued existence who could preserve in perfection the sensual part of man, with such mind or reason as may be independent of the spiritual essence; but whom soul itself has quitted! Man, in short, as the grandest of the animals, but without the sublime discontent of earth, which is the peculiar attribute of soul."

One evening Sir Philip was surprised to find at Haroun's house another European. He paused in his narrative to describe this man. He said that for three or four years previously he had heard frequent mention amongst the cultivators of magic, of an orientalized Englishman engaged in researches

similar to his own, and to whom was ascribed a terrible knowledge in those branches of the art which, even in the East, are condemned as instrumental to evil. Sir Philip here distinguished at length, as he had so briefly distinguished in his conversation with me, between the two kinds of magic—that which he alleged to be as pure from sin as any other species of experimental knowledge, and that by which the agencies of witchcraft are invoked for the purposes of guilt.

The Englishman, to whom the culture of this latter and darker kind of magic was ascribed, Sir Philip Derval had never hitherto come across. He now met him at the house of Haroun; decrepit, emaciated, bowed down with infirmities, and racked with pain. Though little more than sixty, his aspect was that of extreme old age, but still on his face there were seen the ruins of a once singular beauty; and still, in his mind, there was a force that contrasted the decay of the body. Sir Philip had never met with an intellect more powerful and more corrupt. The son of a notorious usurer, heir to immense wealth, and endowed with the talents which justify ambition, he had entered upon life burdened with the odium of his father's name. A duel, to which he had been provoked by an ungenerous taunt on his origin, but in which a temperament fiercely vindictive had led him to violate the usages prescribed by the social laws that regulate such encounters, had subjected him to a trial in which he escaped conviction, either by a flaw in the technicalities of legal procedure, or by the compassion of the jury;* but the moral presumptions against him were sufficiently strong to set an indelible brand on his honor and an insurmountable barrier to the hopes which his early ambition had conceived. After this trial he had quitted his country to return to it no more. Thenceforth, much of his life had been passed out of sight or conjecture of civilized men in remote

* The reader will here observe a discrepancy between Mrs. Poyntz's account and Sir Philip Derval's narrative. According to the former, Louis Grayle was tried in his absence from England, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, which his flight enabled him to evade. According to the latter, Louis Grayle stood his trial, and obtained an acquittal. Sir Philip's account must, at least, be nearer the truth than the lady's, because Louis Grayle could not, according to English law, have been tried on a capital charge without being present in court. Mrs. Poyntz tells her story as a woman generally does tell a story—sure to make a mistake where she touches on a question of law; and unconsciously perhaps to herself the Woman of the World warps the facts in her narrative so as to save the personal dignity of her hero, who has captivated her interest, not from the moral odium of a great crime, but the debasing position of a prisoner at the bar. Allen Fenwick, no doubt, purposely omits to notice the discrepancy between these two statements, or to animadvert on the mistake which, in the eyes of a lawyer, would discredit Mrs. Poyntz's. It is consistent with some of the objects for which Allen Fenwick makes public his Strange Story, to invite the reader to draw his own inferences from the contradictions by which, even in the most commonplace matters (and how much more in any tale of wonder!) a fact stated by one person is made to differ from the same fact stated by another. The rapidity with which a truth becomes transformed into fable, when it is once sent on its travels from lip to

regions and amongst barbarous tribes. At intervals, however, he had reappeared in European capitals; shunned by and shunning his equals, surrounded by parasites, amongst whom were always to be found men of considerable learning, whom avarice or poverty subjected to the influences of his wealth. For the last nine or ten years he had settled in Persia, purchased extensive lands, maintained the retinue, and exercised more than the power, of an Oriental prince. Such was the man who, prematurely worn out, and assured by physicians that he had not six weeks of life, had come to Aleppo with the gaudy escort of an Eastern satrap, had caused himself to be borne in his litter to the mud-hut of Haroun the Sage, and now called on the magician, in whose art was his last hope, to reprieve him from the—grave.

He turned round to Sir Philip, when the latter entered the room, and exclaimed in English, "I am here because you are. Your intimacy with this man was known to me. I took your character as the guarantee of his own. Tell me that I am no credulous dupe. Tell him that I, Louis Grayle, am no needy petitioner. Tell me of his wisdom; assure him of my wealth."

Sir Philip looked inquiringly at Haroun, who remained seated on his carpet in profound silence.

"What is it you ask of Haroun?"

"To live on—to live on. For every year of life he can give me, I will load these floors with gold."

"Gold will not tempt Haroun."

"What will?"

"Ask him yourself; you speak his language."

"I have asked him; he vouchsafes me no answer."

Haroun here suddenly roused himself as from a revery. He drew from under his robe a small phial, from which he let fall a single drop into a cup of water, and said: "Drink this.

lip, is illustrated by an amusement at this moment in fashion. The amusement is this: In a party of eight or ten persons, let one whisper to another an account of some supposed transaction, or a piece of invented gossip relating to absent persons, dead or alive; let the person, who thus first hears the story, proceed to whisper it, as exactly as he can remember what he has just heard, to the next; the next does the same to his neighbor, and so on, till the tale has run the round of the party. Each narrator, as soon as he has whispered his version of the tale, writes down what he has whispered. And though, in this game, no one has had any interest to misrepresent, but, on the contrary, each for his own credit's sake strives to repeat what he has heard as faithfully as he can, it will be almost invariably found that the story told by the first person has received the most material alterations before it has reached the eighth or the tenth. Sometimes, the most important feature of the whole narrative is altogether omitted; sometimes, a feature altogether new and preposterously absurd has been added. At the close of the experiment one is tempted to exclaim, "How after this, can any of those portions of history which the chronicler took from hearsay be believed?" But, above all, does not every anecdote of scandal which has passed, not through ten lips, but perhaps through ten thousand, before it has reached us, become quite as perplexing to him who would get at the truth, as the marvels he recounts are to the bewildered reason of Fenwick the Sceptic?

Send to me to-morrow for such medicaments as I may prescribe. Return hither yourself in three days; not before!"

When Grayle was gone, Sir Philip, moved to pity, asked Haroun if, indeed, it were within the compass of his art to preserve life in a frame that appeared so thoroughly exhausted. Haroun answered: "A fever may so waste the lamp of life that one ruder gust of air could extinguish the flame, yet the sick man recovers. This sick man's existence has been one long fever; this sick man can recover."

"You will aid him to do so?"

"Three days hence I will tell you."

On the third day Grayle revisited Haroun, and, at Haroun's request, Sir Philip came also. Grayle declared that he had already derived unspeakable relief from the remedies administered; he was lavish in expressions of gratitude; pressed large gifts on Haroun, and seemed pained when they were refused. This time Haroun conversed freely, drawing forth Grayle's own irregular, perverted, stormy, but powerful intellect.

I can best convey the general nature of Grayle's share in the dialogue between himself, Haroun, and Derval—recorded in the narrative in words which I cannot trust my memory to repeat in detail—by stating the effect it produced on my own mind. It seemed while I read, as if there passed before me some convulsion of Nature—a storm, an earthquake. Outcries of rage, of scorn, of despair; a despot's vehemence of will; a rebel's scoff at authority. Yet, ever and anon, some swell of lofty thought, some burst of passionate genius—abrupt variations from the vaunt of superb defiance to the wail of intense remorse.

The whole had in it, I know not what, of uncouth but colossal—like the chant, in the old lyrical tragedy, of one of those mythical giants, who, proud of descent from Night and Chaos, had held sway over the elements, while still crude and conflicting, to be crushed under the rocks, upheaved in their struggle, as Order and Harmony subjected a brightening Creation to the milder influences throned in Olympus. But it was not till the later passages of the dialogue in which my interest was now absorbed, that the language ascribed to this sinister personage lost a gloomy pathos not the less impressive for the awe with which it was mingled. For, till then, it seemed to me as if in that tempestuous nature there were still broken glimpses of starry light; that a character originally lofty, if irregular and fierce, had been embittered by early and continuous war with the social world, and had, in that war, become maimed and

distorted; that, under happier circumstances, its fiery strength might have been disciplined to good; that even now, where remorse was so evidently poignant, evil could not be irredeemably confirmed.

At length all the dreary compassion previously inspired vanished in one unqualified abhorrence.

The subjects discussed changed from those which, relating to the common world of men, were within the scope of my reason. Haroun led his wild guest to boast of his own proficiency in magic, and, despite my incredulity, I could not overcome the shudder with which fictions, however extravagant, that deal with that dark Unknown abandoned to the chimeras of poets, will, at night and in solitude, send through the veins of men the least accessible to imaginary terrors.

Grayle spoke of the power he had exercised through the agency of evil spirits—a power to fascinate and to destroy. He spoke of the aid revealed to him, now too late, which such direful allies could afford, not only to a private revenge, but to a kingly ambition. Had he acquired the knowledge he declared himself to possess, before the feebleness of the decaying body made it valueless, how he could have triumphed over that world, which had expelled his youth from its pale! He spoke of means by which his influence could work undetected on the minds of others, control agencies that could never betray, and baffle the justice that could never discover. He spoke vaguely of a power by which a spectral reflection of the material body could be cast, like a shadow, to a distance; glide through the walls of a prison, elude the sentinels of a camp—a power that he asserted to be—when enforced by concentred will, and acting on the mind, wherein each individual temptation found mind the weakest—almost infallible in its effect to seduce or to appal. And he closed these and similar boasts of demoniacal arts, which I remember too obscurely to repeat, with a tumultuous imprecation on their nothingness to avail against the gripe of death. All this lore he would communicate to Haroun, in return for what? A boon shared by the meanest peasant-life, common life; to breathe yet a while the air, feel yet a while the sun.

Then Haroun replied. He said, with a quiet disdain, that the dark art to which Grayle made such boastful pretence was the meanest of all abuses of knowledge, rightly abandoned, in all ages, to the vilest natures. And then, suddenly changing his tone, he spoke, so far as I can remember the word assigned to him in the manuscript, to this effect:

"Fallen and unhappy wretch, and you ask me for prolonged life!—a prolonged curse to the world and to yourself. Shall I employ spells to lengthen the term of the Pestilence, or profane the secrets of Nature to restore vigor and youth to the failing energies of Crime?"

Grayle, as if stunned by the rebuke, fell on his knees with despairing entreaties that strangely contrasted his previous arrogance. "And it was," he said, "because his life had been evil that he dreaded death. If life could be renewed he would repent, he would change; he retracted his vaunts, he would forsake the arts he had boasted, he would re-enter the world as its benefactor."

"So ever the wicked man lies to himself when appalled by the shadow of death," answered Haroun. "But know, by the remorse which preys on thy soul that it is not thy soul that addresses its prayer to me. Couldst thou hear, through the storms of the Mind, the soul's melancholy whisper, it would dissuade thee from a wish to live on. While I speak, I behold it, that SOUL! Sad for the stains on its essence, awed by the account it must render, but dreading, as the direst calamity, a renewal of years below—darker stains and yet heavier accounts. Whatever the sentence it may now undergo, it has a hope for mercy in the remorse which the mind vainly struggles to quell. But darker its doom if longer retained to earth, yoked to the mind that corrupts it, and enslaved to the senses which thou bidst me restore to their tyrannous forces."

And Grayle bowed his head and covered his face with his hands in silence and in trembling.

Then Sir Philip, seized with compassion, pleaded for him. "At least, could not the soul have longer time on earth for repentance?" And while Sir Philip was so pleading, Grayle fell prostrate in a swoon like that of death. When he recovered, his head was leaning on Haroun's knee, and his opening eyes fixed on the glittering phial which Haroun held, and from which his lips had been moistened.

"Wondrous!" he murmured; "how I feel life flowing back to me. And that, then, is the elixir! It is no fable!"

His hands stretched greedily as to seize the phial, and he cried imploringly, "More, more!" Haroun replaced the vessel in the folds of his robe, and answered:

"I will not renew thy youth, but I will release thee from bodily suffering: I will leave the mind and the soul free from the pangs of the flesh, to reconcile, if yet possible, their long war. My skill may afford thee months yet for repentance; see,

in that interval, to atone for the evil of sixty years; apply thy wealth where it may most compensate for injury done, most relieve the indigent, and most aid the virtuous. Listen to thy remorse. Humble thyself in prayer."

Grayle departed, sighed heavily, and muttering to himself.

The next day Haroun summoned Sir Philip Derval, and said to him:

"Depart to Damascus. In that city the Pestilence has appeared. Go thither thou, to heal and to save. In this casket are stored the surest antidotes to the poison of the plague. Of that essence, undiluted and pure, which tempts to the undue prolongation of soul in the prison of flesh, this casket contains not a drop. I curse not my friend with so mournful a boon. Thou hast learned enough of my art to know by what simples the health of the temperate is easily restored to its balance, and their path to the grave smoothed from pain. Not more should Man covet from Nature for the solace and weal of the body. Nobler gifts far than aught for the body this casket contains. Herein are the essences which quicken the life of those duplicate senses that lie dormant and coiled in their chrysalis web, awaiting the wings of a future development—the senses by which we can see, though not with the eye, and hear, but not by the ear. Herein are the links between Man's mind and Nature's; herein are secrets more precious even than these—those extracts of light which enable the Soul to distinguish itself from the Mind, and discriminate the spiritual life, not more from life carnal than life intellectual. Where thou seest some noble intellect, studious of Nature, intent upon Truth, yet ignoring the fact that all animal life has a mind, and Man alone on the earth ever asked, and has asked, from the hour his step trod the Earth and his eye sought the Heaven, 'Have I not a soul—can it perish!'—there, such aids to the soul, in the innermost vision vouchsafed to the mind, thou mayst lawfully use. But the treasures contained in this casket are like all which a mortal can win from the mines he explores—good or ill in their uses as they pass to the hands of the good or the evil. Thou wilt never confide them but to those who will not abuse; and even then, thou art an adept too versed in the mysteries of Nature not to discriminate between the powers that may serve the good to good ends, and the powers that may tempt the good, where less wise than experience has made thee and me, to the ends that are evil; and not even to thy friend, the most virtuous—if less proof against passion, than thou and I have become—wilt thou confide such contents of the casket as may

work on the fancy, to deafen the conscience, and imperil the soul."

Sir Philip took the casket, and with it directions for use, which he did not detail. He then spoke to Haroun about Louis Grayle, who had inspired him with a mingled sentiment of admiration and abhorrence; of pity and terror. And Haroun answered thus, repeating the words ascribed to him, so far as I can trust, in regard to them as to all else in this marvellous narrative to a memory habitually tenacious even in ordinary matters, and strained to the utmost extent of its power, by the strangeness of the ideas presented to it, and the intensity of my personal interest in whatever admitted a ray into that cloud which, gathering fast over my reason, now threatened storm to my affections:

"When the mortal deliberately allies himself to the spirits of evil, he surrenders the citadel of his being to the guard of its enemies; and those who look from without can only dimly guess what passes within the precincts abandoned to Powers whose very nature we shrink to contemplate, lest our mere gaze should invite them. This man, whom thou pitiest, is not yet everlastingly consigned to the fiends; because his soul still struggles against them. His life has been one long war between his intellect, which is mighty, and his spirit, which is feeble. The intellect, armed and winged by the passions, has besieged and oppressed the soul; but the soul has never ceased to repine and to repent. And at moments it has gained its inherent ascendency, persuaded revenge to drop the prey it had seized, turned the mind astray from hatred and wrath into unwonted paths of charity and love. In the long desert of guilt, there have been green spots and fountains of good. The fiends have occupied the intellect which invoked them, but they have never yet thoroughly mastered the soul which their presence appals. In the struggle that now passes within that breast, amidst the flickers of waning mortality, only Allah, whose eye never slumbers, can aid."

Haroun then continued, in words yet more strange and yet more deeply graved in my memory:

"There have been men (thou mayst have known such), who, after an illness in which life itself seemed suspended, have arisen, as out of a sleep, with characters wholly changed. Before, perhaps gentle and good and truthful, they now become bitter, maligant, and false. To the persons and the things they had before loved, they evince repugnance and loathing. Sometimes this change is so marked and irrational, that their

kindred ascribe it to madness. Not the madness which affects them in the ordinary business of life, but that which turns into harshness and discord the moral harmony that results from natures whole and complete. But there are dervishes who hold that in that illness, which had for its time the likeness of death, the soul itself has passed away, and an evil genius has fixed itself into the body and the brain, thus left void of their former tenant, and animates them in the unaccountable change from the past to the present existence. Such mysteries have formed no part of my study, and I tell you the conjecture received in the East without hazarding a comment whether of incredulity or belief. But if, in this war between the mind which the fiends have seized, and the soul which implores refuge of Allah; if, while the mind of yon traveller now covets life lengthened on earth for the enjoyments it had perverted its faculties to seek and to find in sin, and covets so eagerly that it would shrink from no crime, and revolt from no fiend, that could promise the gift—the soul shudderingly implores to be saved from new guilt, and would rather abide by the judgment of Allah on the sins that have darkened it, than pass forever irredeemably away to the demons: if this be so, what if the soul's petition be heard? What if it rise from the ruins around it? What if the ruins be left to the witchcraft that seeks to rebuild them? There, if demons might enter, that which they sought as their prize has escaped them: that which they find would mock them by its own incompleteness even in evil. In vain might animal life the most perfect be given to the machine of the flesh; in vain might the mind, freed from the check of the soul, be left to roam at will through a brain stored with memories of knowledge and skilled in the command of its faculties; in vain, in addition to all that body and brain bestow on the normal condition of man, might unhallowed reminiscences gather all the arts and the charms of the sorcery by which the fiends tempted the soul, before it fled, through the passions of flesh and the cravings of mind: the Thing, thus devoid of a soul, would be an instrument of evil, doubtless; but an instrument that of itself could not design, invent, and complete. The demons themselves could have no permanent hold on the perishable materials. They might enter it for some gloomy end which Allah permits in his inscrutable wisdom; but they could leave it no trace when they pass from it, because there is no conscience where soul is wanting. The human animal without soul, but otherwise made felicitously perfect in its mere vital organization, might ravage and destroy, as the

tiger and the serpent may destroy and ravage, and, the moment after, would sport in the sunlight harmless and rejoicing, because, like the serpent and the tiger, it is incapable of remorse."

"Why startle my wonder," said Derval, "with so fantastic an image?"

"Because, possibly, the image may come into palpable form! I know, while I speak to thee, that this miserable man is calling to his aid the evil sorcery over which he boasts his control. To gain the end he desires, he must pass through a crime. Sorcery whispers to him how to pass through it, secure from the detection of man. The soul resists, but in resisting is weak against the tyranny of the mind to which it has submitted so long. Question me no more. But if I vanish from thine eyes; if thou hear that the death which, to my sorrow and in my foolishness I have failed to recognize as the merciful minister of Heaven, has removed me at last from the earth, believe that the Pale Visitant was welcome, and that I humbly accept as a blessed release the lot of our common humanity."

Sir Philip went to Damascus. There he found the pestilence raging; there, he devoted himself to the cure of the afflicted; in no single instance, so at least he declared, did the antidotes stored in the casket fail in their effect. The pestilence had passed; his medicaments were exhausted; when the news reached him that Haroun was no more. The Sage had been found, one morning, lifeless in his solitary home, and, according to popular rumor, marks on his throat betrayed the murderous hand of the strangler. Simultaneously, Louis Grayle had disappeared from the city, and was supposed to have shared the fate of Haroun, and been secretly buried by the assassins who had deprived him of life. Sir Philip hastened to Aleppo. There, he ascertained that on the night in which Haroun died, Grayle did not disappear alone; with him were also missing two of his numerous suite; the one, an Arab woman, named Ayesha, who had for some years been his constant companion, his pupil and associate in the mystic practices to which his intellect had been debased, and who was said to have acquired a singular influence over him, partly by her beauty and partly by the tenderness with which she had nursed him through his long decline; the other, an Indian, specially assigned to her service, of whom all the wild retainers of Grayle spoke with detestation and terror. He was believed by them to belong to that murderous sect of fanatics whose existence as a community has only recently been made known to

Europe, and who strangle their unsuspecting victim in the firm belief that they thereby propitiate the favor of the goddess they serve. The current opinion at Aleppo was, that if those two persons had conspired to murder Haroun, perhaps for the sake of the treasures he was said to possess, it was still more certain that they had made away with their own English lord, whether for the sake of the jewels he wore about him, or for the sake of treasures less doubtful than those imputed to Haroun, and of which the hiding-place would to them be much better known. "I did not share that opinion," wrote the narrator; for I assured myself that Ayesha sincerely loved her awful master; and that love need excite no wonder, for Louis Grayle was one whom if a woman, and especially a woman of the East, had once loved, before old age and infirmity fell on him, she would love and cherish still more devotedly when it became her task to protect the being who, in his day of power and command, had exalted his slave into the rank of his pupil and companion. And the Indian whom Grayle had assigned to her service was allowed to have that brute kind of fidelity which, though it recoils from no crime for a master, refuses all crime against him.

"I came to the conclusion that Haroun had been murdered by order of Louis Grayle—for the sake of the elixir of life—murdered by Juma the Strangler; and that Grayle himself had been aided in his flight from Aleppo, and tended, through the effects of the life-giving drug thus murderously obtained, by the womanly love of the Arab woman, Ayesha. These convictions (since I could not—without being ridiculed as the wildest of dupes—even hint at the vital elixir) I failed to impress on the Eastern officials, or even on a countryman of my own whom I chanced to find at Aleppo. They only arrived at what seemed the common-sense verdict, viz., that Haroun might have been strangled, or might have died in a fit (the body, little examined, was buried long before I came to Aleppo); and that Louis Grayle was murdered by his own treacherous dependents. But all trace of the fugitives was lost.

"And now," wrote Sir Philip, "I will state by what means I discovered that Louis Grayle still lived—changed from age into youth; a new form, a new being; realizing, I verily believe, the image which Haroun's words had raised up, in what then seemed to me the metaphysics of phantasy; criminal, without consciousness of crime; the dreadest of the mere animal race; an incarnation of the blind powers of Nature—beautiful and joyous, wanton, and terrible, and destroying! Such

as ancient myths have personified in the idols of Oriental creeds; such as Nature, of herself, might form man in her moments of favor, if man were wholly the animal, and spirit were no longer the essential distinction between himself and the races to which by superior formation and subtler perceptions he would still be the king.

"But *this* being is yet more dire and portentous than the mere animal man, for in him are not only the fragmentary memories of a pristine intelligence which no mind, unaided by the presence of soul, could have originally compassed, but amidst that intelligence are the secrets of the magic which is learned through the agencies of spirits the most hostile to our race. And who shall say whether the fiends do not enter at their will this void and deserted temple whence the soul has departed, and use as their tools, passive and unconscious, all the faculties which, skillful in sorcery, still place a mind at the control of their malice?

"It was in the interest excited in me by the strange and terrible fate that befel an Armenian family with which I was slightly acquainted, that I first traced, in the creature I am now about to describe, and whose course I devote myself to watch, and trust to bring to a close, the murderer of Haroun for the sake of the elixir of youth.

"In this Armenian family there were three daughters; one of them—"

I had just read thus far when a dim shadow fell over the page, and a cold air seemed to breathe on me. Cold—so cold, that my blood halted in my veins as if suddenly frozen! Involuntarily I started, and looked up, sure that some ghastly presence was in the room. And then, on the opposite side of the wall, I beheld an unsubstantial likeness of a human form. Shadow I call it, but the word is not strictly correct, for it was luminous, though with a pale shine. In some exhibition in London there is shown a curious instance of optical illusion; at the end of a corridor you see, apparently in strong light, a human skull. You are convinced it is there as you approach; it is, however, only a reflection from a skull at a distance. The image before me was less vivid, less seemingly prominent than is the illusion I speak of. I was not deceived. I felt it was a spectrum, a phantasm, but I felt no less surely that it was a reflection from an animate form—the form and the face of Margrave; it was there, distinct, unmistakable. Conceiving that he himself must be behind me, I sought to rise, to turn round, to examine. I could not move: limb and muscle were

overmastered by some incomprehensible spell. Gradually my senses forsook me, I became unconscious as well as motionless. When I recovered, I heard the clock strike three. I must have been nearly two hours insensible; the candles before me were burning low; my eyes rested on the table; the dead man's manuscript was gone!

CHAPTER XL.

THE dead man's manuscript was gone. But how? A phantom might delude my eye, a human will, though exerted at a distance, might, if the tales of mesmerism be true, deprive me of movement and of consciousness; but neither phantom nor mesmeric will could surely remove from the table before me the material substance of the book that had vanished! Was I to seek explanation in the arts of sorcery ascribed to Louis Grayle in the narrative? I would not pursue that conjecture. Against it my reason rose up half-alarmed, half-disdainful. Some one must have entered the room, some one have removed the manuscript. I looked round. The windows were closed, the curtains partly drawn over the shutters, as they were before my consciousness had left me: all seemed undisturbed. Snatching up one of the candles, fast dying out, I went into the adjoining library, the desolate state-rooms, into the entrance-hall, and examined the outer door. Barred and locked! The robber had left no vestige of his stealthy presence.

I resolved to go at once to Strahan's room and tell him of the loss sustained. A deposit had been confided to me, and I felt as if there were a slur on my honor every moment in which I kept its abstraction concealed from him to whom I was responsible for the trust. I hastily ascended the great staircase, grim with faded portraits, and found myself in a long corridor opening on my own bed-room; no doubt also on Strahan's. Which was his? I knew not. I opened rapidly door after door, peered into empty chambers, went blundering on, when, to the right, down a narrow passage, I recognized the signs of my host's whereabouts—signs familiarly commonplace and vulgar, signs by which the inmate of any chamber in lodging-house or inn makes himself known—a chair before a doorway, clothes negligently thrown on it, beside it a pair of shoes. And so ludicrous did such testimony of common every-day life, of the habits which Strahan would necessarily have contracted in his desultory, unluxurious bachelor's exis-

tence—so ludicrous, I say, did these homely details seem to me, so grotesquely at variance with the wonders of which I had been reading, with the wonders yet more incredible of which I myself had been witness and victim, that as I turned down the passage, I heard my own unconscious, half-hysterical laugh; and, startled by the sound of that laugh as if it came from some one else I paused, my hand on the door, and asked myself: "Do I dream? Am I awake? And if awake, what am I to say to the commonplace mortal I am about to rouse? Speak to him of a phantom! Speak to him of some weird spell over this strong frame! Speak to him of a mystic trance in which has been stolen what he confided to me, without my knowledge! What will he say? What should I have said a few days ago to any man who told such a tale to me?" I did not wait to resolve these questions. I entered the room. There was Strahan sound asleep on his bed. I shook him roughly. He started up, rubbed his eyes: "You, Allen—you! What the deuce?—what's the matter?"

"Strahan, I have been robbed!—robbed of the manuscript you lent me. I could not rest till I had told you."

"Robbed, robbed! Are you serious?"

By this time Strahan had thrown off the bed-clothes, and sat upright, staring at me.

And then those questions which my mind had suggested while I was standing at his door repeated themselves with double force. Tell this man, this unimaginative, hard-headed, raw-boned, sandy-haired North-countryman—tell this man a story which the most credulous school-girl would have rejected as a fable! Impossible.

"I fell asleep," said I, coloring and stammering, for the slightest deviation from truth was painful to me, "and—and—when I woke—the manuscript was gone. Some one must have entered, and committed the theft—"

"Some one entered the house at this hour of the night, and then only stolen a manuscript which could be of no value to him! Absurd! If thieves have come in, it must be for other objects—for plate, for money. I will dress; we will see!"

Strahan hurried on his clothes, muttering to himself, and avoiding my eye. He was embarrassed. He did not like to say to an old friend what was on his mind, but I saw at once that he suspected I had resolved to deprive him of the manuscript, and had invented a wild tale in order to conceal my own dishonesty.

Nevertheless, he proceeded to search the house. I followed

him in silence, oppressed with my own thoughts, and longing for solitude in my own chamber. We found no one, no trace of any one, nothing to excite suspicion. There were but two female servants sleeping in the house—the old housekeeper, and a country girl who assisted her. It was not possible to suspect either of these persons, but in the course of our search we opened the doors of their rooms. We saw that they were both in bed, both seemingly asleep; it seemed idle to wake and question them. When the formality of our futile investigation was concluded, Strahan stopped at the door of my bedroom, and for the first time fixing his eyes on me steadily, said:

"Allen Fenwick, I would have given half the fortune I have come into rather than this had happened. The manuscript, as you know, was bequeathed to me as a sacred trust by a benefactor whose slightest wish it is my duty to observe religiously. If it contained aught valuable to a man of your knowledge and profession—why, you were free to use its contents. Let me hope, Allen, that the book will reappear to-morrow."

He said no more, drew himself away from the hand I involuntarily extended, and walked quickly back towards his own room.

Alone once more, I sank on a seat, buried my face in my hands, and strove in vain to collect into some definite shape my own tumultuous and disordered thoughts. Could I attach serious credit to the marvellous narrative I had read? Were there, indeed, such powers given to man? Such influences latent in the calm routine of Nature? I could not believe it; I must have some morbid affection of the brain; I must be under an hallucination. Hallucination? The phantom, yes—the trance, yes. But still, how came the book gone? That, at least, was not hallucination.

I left my room the next morning with a vague hope that I should find the manuscript somewhere in the study; that, in my own trance, I might have secreted it, as sleep-walkers are said to secrete things, without remembrance of their acts in their waking state.

I searched minutely in every conceivable place. Strahan found me still employed in that hopeless task. He had breakfasted in his own room, and it was past eleven o'clock when he joined me. His manner was now hard, cold, and distant, and his suspicion so bluntly shown, that my distress gave way to resentment.

"Is it possible," I cried indignantly, "that you who have known me so well can suspect me of an act so base, and so

gratuitously base? Purloin, conceal a book confided to me, with full power to copy from it whatever I might desire, use its contents in any way that might seem to me serviceable to science, or useful to me in my own calling!"

"I have not accused you," answered Strahan sullenly. "But what are we to say to Mr. Jeeves; to all others who know that this manuscript existed? Will they believe what you tell me?"

"Mr. Jeeves," I said, "cannot suspect a fellow-townsman, whose character is as high as mine, of untruth and theft. And to whom else have you communicated the facts connected with a memoir and a request of so extraordinary a nature?"

"To young Margrave; I told you so!"

"True, true. We need not go further to find the thief. Margrave has been in this house more than once. He knows the position of the rooms. You have named the robber!"

"Tut! what on earth could a gay young fellow like Margrave want with a work of such dry and recondite nature as I presume my poor kinsman's memoir must be?"

I was about to answer, when the door was abruptly opened, and the servant girl entered, followed by two men, in whom I recognized the superintendent of the L—— police and the same subordinate who had found me by Sir Philip's corpse.

The superintendent came up to me with a grave face, and whispered in my ear. I did not at first comprehend him. "Come with you," I said, "and to Mr. Vigors, the magistrate? I thought my deposition was closed."

The superintendent shook his head. "I have the authority here, Dr. Fenwick."

"Well, I will come, of course. Has anything new transpired?"

The superintendent turned to the servant-girl, who was standing with gaping mouth and staring eyes. "Show us Dr. Fenwick's room. You had better put up, sir, whatever things you have brought here. I will go upstairs with you," he whispered again. "Come, Dr. Fenwick, I am in the discharge of my duty."

Something in the man's manner was so sinister and menacing that I felt at once that some new and strange calamity had befallen me. I turned towards Strahan. He was at the threshold, speaking in a low voice to the subordinate policeman, and there was an expression of amazement and horror in his countenance. As I came towards him he darted away without a word.

I went up the stairs, entered my bedroom, the superintendent close behind me. As I took up mechanically the few things I had brought with me, the police-officer drew them from me with an abruptness that appeared insolent, and deliberately searched the pockets of the coat which I had worn the evening before, then opened the drawers in the room, and even pried into the bed.

"What do you mean?" I asked haughtily.

"Excuse me, sir. Duty. You are—"

"Well, I am what?"

"My prisoner; here is the warrant."

"Warrant! on what charge?"

"The murder of Sir Philip Derval."

"I—I! Murder!" I could say no more.

I must hurry over this awful passage in my marvellous record. It is torture to dwell on the details, and indeed I have so sought to chase them from my recollection, that they only come back to me in hideous fragments, like the incoherent remains of a horrible dream.

All that I need state is as follows: Early on the very morning on which I had been arrested, a man, a stranger in the town, had privately sought Mr. Vigors, and deposed that on the night of the murder he had been taking refuge from a sudden storm under shelter of the eaves and buttresses of a wall adjoining an old archway; that he had heard men talking within the archway; had heard one say to the other, "You still bear me a grudge." The other had replied, "I can forgive you on one condition." That he then lost much of the conversation that ensued, which was in a lower voice; but he gathered enough to know that the condition demanded by the one was the possession of a casket which the other carried about with him. That there seemed an altercation on this matter between the two men, which, to judge by the tones of voice, was angry on the part of the man demanding the casket; that, finally, this man said in a loud key, "Do you still refuse?" and on receiving the answer which the witness did not overhear, exclaimed threateningly, "It is you who will repent": and then stepped forth from the arch into the street. The rain had then ceased, but by a broad flash of lightning the witness saw distinctly the figure of the person thus quitting the shelter of the arch; a man of tall stature, powerful frame, erect carriage. A little time afterwards, witness saw a slighter and older man come forth from the arch, whom he could only examine by the flickering ray of the gas-lamp near the wall, the lightning hav-

ing ceased, but whom he fully believed to be the person he afterwards discovered to be Sir Philip Derval.

He said that he himself had only arrived at the town a few hours before; a stranger to L——, and indeed to England; having come from the United States of America, where he had passed his life from childhood. He had journeyed on foot to L——, in the hope of finding there some distant relatives. He had put up at a small inn, after which he had strolled through the town, when the storm had driven him to seek shelter. He had then failed to find his way back to the inn, and after wandering about in vain, and seeing no one at that late hour of night of whom he could ask the way, he had crept under a portico and slept for two or three hours. Waking towards the dawn, he had then got up, and again sought to find his way to the inn, when he saw, in a narrow street before him, two men, one of whom he recognized as the taller of the two, to whose conversation he had listened under the arch, the other he did not recognize at the moment. The taller man seemed angry and agitated, and he heard him say, "The casket; I will have it." There then seemed to be a struggle between these two persons, when the taller one struck down the shorter, knelt on his breast, and he caught distinctly the gleam of some steel instrument. That he was so frightened that he could not stir from the place, and that though he cried out, he believed his voice was not heard. He then saw the taller man rise, the other resting on the pavement motionless; and a minute or so afterwards beheld policemen coming to the place, on which he, the witness, walked away. He did not know that a murder had been committed; it might be only an assault; it was no business of his, he was a stranger. He thought it best not to interfere, the police having cognizance of the affair. He found out his inn; for the next few days he was absent from L——, in search of his relations, who had left the town, many years ago, to fix their residence in one of the neighboring villages.

He was, however, disappointed, none of these relations now survived. He had now returned to L——, heard of the murder, was in doubt what to do, might get himself into trouble if, a mere stranger, he gave an unsupported testimony. But, on the day before the evidence was volunteered, as he was lounging in the streets, he had seen a gentleman pass by on horseback, in whom he immediately recognized the man who, in his belief, was the murderer of Sir Philip Derval. He inquired of a bystander the name of the gentleman; the answer was

"Dr. Fenwick." That, the rest of the day, he felt much disturbed in his mind, not liking to volunteer such a charge against a man of apparent respectability and station. But that his conscience would not let him sleep that night, and he had resolved at morning to go to the magistrate and make a clean breast of it.

The story was in itself so improbable that any other magistrate but Mr. Vigors would perhaps have dismissed it in contempt. But Mr. Vigors, already so bitterly prejudiced against me, and not sorry, perhaps, to subject me to the humiliation of so horrible a charge, immediately issued his warrant to search my house. I was absent at Derval Court; the house was searched. In the bureau in my favorite study, which was left unlocked, the steel casket was discovered, and a large case-knife, on the blade of which the stains of blood were still perceptible. On this discovery I was apprehended, and on these evidences, and on the deposition of this vagrant stranger, I was, not indeed committed to take my trial for murder, but placed in confinement; all bail for my appearance refused, and the examination adjourned to give time for further evidence and inquiries. I had requested the professional aid of Mr. Jeeves. To my surprise and dismay Mr. Jeeves begged me to excuse him. He said he was pre-engaged by Mr. Strahan to detect and prosecute the murderer of Sir Philip Derval, and could not assist one accused of the murder. I gathered from the little he said that Strahan had already been to him that morning and told him of the missing manuscript; that Strahan had ceased to be my friend. I engaged another solicitor, a young man of ability, and who professed personal esteem for me. Mr. Stanton (such was the lawyer's name) believed in my innocence; but he warned me that appearances were grave, he implored me to be perfectly frank with him. Had I held conversation with Sir Philip under the archway as reported by the witness? Had I used such or similar words? Had the deceased said, "I had a grudge against him"? Had I demanded the casket? Had I threatened Sir Philip that he would repent? And of what? His refusal?

I felt myself grow pale as I answered "Yes, I thought such or similar expressions had occurred in my conversation with the deceased."

"What was the reason of the grudge? What was the nature of this casket, that I should so desire its possession?"

There, I became terribly embarrassed. What could I say to a keen, sensible, worldly man of law? Tell him of the powder

and the fumes, of the scene in the museum, of Sir Philip's tale, of the implied identity of the youthful Margrave with the aged Grayle, of the elixir of life, and of magic arts? I—I tell such a romance! I the noted adversary of all pretended mysticism. I—I a sceptical practitioner of medicine! Had that manuscript of Sir Philip's been available—a substantial record of marvellous events by a man of repute for intellect and learning—I might, perhaps, have ventured to startle the solicitor of L—— with my revelations. But the sole proof that all which the solicitor urged me to confide was not a monstrous fiction or an insane delusion had disappeared; and its disappearance was a part of the terrible mystery that enveloped the whole. I answered, therefore, as composedly as I could, that "I could have no serious grudge against Sir Philip, whom I had never seen before that evening; that the words, which applied to my supposed grudge, were lightly said by Sir Philip, in reference to a physiological dispute on matters connected with mesmerical phenomena; that the deceased had declared his casket, which he had shown me at the mayor's house, contained drugs of great potency in medicine; that I had asked permission to test those drugs myself; and that when I said he would repent of his refusal, I merely meant that he would repent of his reliance on drugs not warranted by the experiments of professional science.

My replies seemed to satisfy the lawyer so far, but "how could I account for the casket and the knife being found in my room?"

"In no way but this; the window of my study is a door-window opening on the lane, from which any one might enter the room. I was in the habit, not only of going out myself that way, but of admitting through that door any more familiar private acquaintance."

"Whom, for instance?"

I hesitated a moment, and then said, with a significance I could not forbear: "Mr. Margrave! He would know the *locale* perfectly; he would know that the door was rarely bolted from within during the day-time: he could enter at all hours; he could place, or instruct any one to deposit the knife and casket in my bureau, which he knew I never kept locked; it contained no secrets, no private correspondence—chiefly surgical implements, or such things as I might want for professional experiments."

"Mr. Margrave! But you cannot suspect him—a lively, charming young man, against whose character not a whisper

was ever heard—of connivance with such a charge against you; a connivance that would implicate him in the murder itself, for if you are accused wrongfully, he who accuses you is either the criminal or the criminal's accomplice; his instigator or his tool."

"Mr. Stanton," I said firmly, after a moment's pause, "I do suspect Mr. Margrave of a hand in this crime. Sir Philip, on seeing him at the mayor's house, expressed a strong abhorrence of him, more than hinted at crimes he had committed; appointed me to come to Derval Court the day after that on which the murder was committed. Sir Philip had known something of this Margrave in the East—Margrave might dread exposure, revelations—of what I know not; but, strange as it may seem to you, it is my conviction that this young man, apparently so gay and so thoughtless, is the real criminal, and in some way, which I cannot conjecture, has employed this lying vagabond in the fabrication of a charge against myself. Reflect: of Mr. Margrave's antecedents we know nothing; of them nothing was known even by the young gentleman who first introduced him to the society of this town. If you would serve and save me, it is to that quarter that you will direct your vigilant and unrelaxing researches."

I had scarcely so said when I repented my candor, for I observed in the face of Mr. Stanton a sudden revulsion of feeling, an utter incredulity of the accusation I had thus hazarded, and for the first time a doubt of my own innocence. The fascination exercised by Margrave was universal; nor was it to be wondered at; for, besides the charm of his joyous presence, he seemed so singularly free from even the errors common enough with the young. So gay and boon a companion, yet a shunner of wine; so dazzling in aspect, so more than beautiful, so courted, so idolized by women, yet no tale of seduction, of profligacy, attached to his name! As to his antecedents, he had so frankly owned himself a natural son, a nobody, a traveller, an idler; his expenses, though lavish, were so unostentatious, so regularly defrayed. He was so wholly the reverse of the character assigned to criminals, that it seemed as absurd to bring a charge of homicide against a butterfly or a goldfinch as against this seemingly innocent and delightful favorite of humanity and nature.

However, Mr. Stanton said little or nothing, and shortly afterwards left me, with a dry expression of hope that my innocence would be cleared in spite of evidence that, he was bound to say, was of the most serious character.

I was exhausted. I fell into a profound sleep early that night; it might be a little after twelve when I woke, and woke as fully, as completely, as much restored to life and consciousness, as it was then my habit to be at the break of day. And, so waking, I saw, on the wall opposite my bed, the same luminous phantom I had seen in the wizard's study at Derval Court. I have read in Scandinavian legends of an apparition called the Scin-Læca, or shining corpse. It is supposed, in the northern superstition, sometimes to haunt sepulchres, sometimes to foretell doom. It is the spectre of a human body seen in a phosphoric light, and so exactly did this phantom correspond to the description of such an apparition in Scandinavian fable that I know not how to give it a better name than that of Scin-Læca—the shining corpse.

There it was before me, corpse-like, yet not dead; there, as in the haunted study of the wizard Forman!—the form and the face of Margrave. Constitutionally, my nerves are strong, and my temper hardy, and now I was resolved to battle against any impression which my senses might receive from my own deluding fancies. Things that witnessed for the first time daunt us, witnessed for the second time lose their terror. I rose from my bed with a bold aspect, I approached the phantom with a firm step; but when within two paces of it, and my hand outstretched to touch it, my arm became fixed in air, my feet locked to the ground. I did not experience fear; I felt that my heart beat regularly, but an invincible something opposed itself to me. I stood as if turned to stone, and then from the lips of this phantom there came a voice, but a voice which seemed borne from a great distance—very low, muffled, and yet distinct: I could not even be sure that my ear heard it, or whether the sound was not conveyed to me by an inner sense.

"I, and I alone, can save and deliver you," said the voice. "I will do so; and the conditions I ask, in return, are simple and easy."

"Fiend or spectre, or mere delusion of my own brain," cried I, "there can be no compact between thee and me. I despise thy malice, I reject thy services; I accept no conditions to escape from the one or to obtain the other."

"You may give a different answer when I ask again."

The Scin-Læca slowly waned, and, fading first into a paler shadow, then vanished. I rejoiced at the reply I had given. Two days elapsed before Mr. Stanton again came to me; in the interval the Scin-Læca did not reappear. I had mustered all my courage, all my common-sense, noted down all the weak

points of the false evidence against me, and felt calm and supported by the strength of my innocence.

The first few words of the solicitor dashed all my courage to the ground. For I was anxious to hear news of Lilian,—anxious to have some message from her that might cheer and stengthen me, and my first question was this:

"Mr. Stanton, you are aware that I am engaged in marriage to Miss Ashleigh. Your family are not unacquainted with her. What says, what thinks she of this monstrous charge against her betrothed?"

"I was for two hours at Mrs. Ashleigh's house last evening," replied the lawyer; "she was naturally anxious to see me as employed in your defence. Who do you think was there? Who, eager to defend you, to express his persuasion of your innocence, to declare his conviction that the real criminal would be soon discovered—who but that same Mr. Margrave, whom, pardon me my frankness, you so rashly and groundlessly suspected."

"Heavens! Do you say that he is received in that house? That he—*he* is familiarly admitted to *her* presence?"

"My good sir, why these unjust prepossessions against a true friend? It was as your friend that, as soon as the charge against you amazed and shocked the town of L——, Mr. Margrave called on Mrs. Ashleigh—presented to her by Miss Brabazon—and was so cheering and hopeful that—"

"Enough!" I exclaimed—"enough!"

I paced the room in a state of excitement and rage, which the lawyer in vain endeavored to calm, until at length I halted abruptly: "Well,—and you saw Miss Ashleigh? What message does she send to me—her betrothed?"

Mr. Stanton looked confused. "Message! Consider, sir—Miss Ashleigh's situation—the delicacy—and—and—"

"I understand! No message, no word, from a young lady so respectable to a man accused of murder."

Mr. Stanton was silent for some moments; and then said quietly: "Let us change this subject; let us think of what more immediately presses. I see you have been making some notes; may I look at them?"

I composed myself and sat down. "This accuser! Have inquiries really been made as to himself, and his statement of his own proceedings? He comes, he says, from America—in what ship? At what port did he land? Is there any evidence to corroborate his story of the relations he tried to discover—of the inn at which he first put up, and to which he could not find his way?"

"Your suggestions are sensible, Dr. Fenwick. I have forestalled them. It is true that the man lodged at a small inn—the Rising Sun—true that he made inquiries about some relations of the name of Walls, who formerly resided at L——, and afterwards removed to a village ten miles distant—two brothers—tradesmen of small means but respectable character. He at first refused to say at what seaport he landed, in what ship he sailed. I suspect that he has now told a falsehood as to these matters. I have sent my clerk to Southampton—for it is there he said that he was put on shore; we shall see—the man himself is detained in close custody. I hear that his manner is strange and excitable; but that he preserves silence as much as possible. It is generally believed that he is a bad character, perhaps a returned convict, and that this is the true reason why he so long delayed giving evidence, and has been since so reluctant to account for himself. But even if his testimony should be impugned, should break down, still we should have to account for the fact that the casket and the case-knife were found in your bureau. For, granting that a person could, in your absence, have entered your study and placed the articles in your bureau, it is clear that such a person must have been well acquainted with your house; and this stranger to L—— could not have possessed that knowledge."

"Of course not—Mr. Margrave did possess it!"

"Mr. Margrave again!—oh, sir."

I arose and moved away, with an impatient gesture. I could not trust myself to speak. That night I did not sleep; I watched impatiently, gazing on the opposite wall, for the gleam of the Scin-Læca. But the night passed away, and the spectre did not appear

CHAPTER XLI.

The lawyer came the next day, and with something like a smile on his lips. He brought me a few lines in pencil from Mrs. Ashleigh; they were kindly expressed, bade me be of good cheer; "she never for a moment believed in my guilt; Lilian bore up wonderfully under so terrible a trial; it was an unspeakable comfort to both to receive the visits of a friend so attached to me, and so confident of a triumphant refutation of the hideous calumny, under which I now suffered, as Mr. Margrave!"

The lawyer had seen Margrave again—seen him in that house. Margrave seemed almost domiciled there!

I remained sullen and taciturn during this visit. I longed again for the night. Night came. I heard the distant clock strike twelve, when again the icy wind passed through my hair, and against the wall stood the Luminous Shadow.

"Have you considered?" whispered the voice, still as from afar. "I repeat it—I alone can save you."

"Is it among the conditions which you ask, in return, that I shall resign to you the woman I love."

"No."

"Is it one of the conditions that I should commit some crime—a crime perhaps heinous as that of which I am accused?"

"No."

"With such reservations, I accept the conditions you may name, provided I, in my turn, may demand one condition from yourself."

"Name it."

"I ask you to quit this town. I ask you, meanwhile, to cease your visits to the house that holds the woman betrothed to me."

"I will cease those visits. And before many days are over, I will quit this town."

"Now, then, say what you ask from me. I am prepared to concede it. And not from fear for myself, but because I fear for the pure and innocent being who is under the spell of your deadly fascination. This is your power over me. You command me through my love for another. Speak."

"My conditions are simple. You will pledge yourself to desist from all charges of insinuation against myself, of what nature soever. You will not, when you meet me in the flesh, refer to what you have known of my likeness in the Shadow. You will be invited to the house at which I may be also a guest; you will come; you will meet and converse with me as guest speaks with guest in the house of a host."

"Is that all?"

"It is all."

"Then I pledge you my faith; keep your own."

"Fear not; sleep secure in the certainty that you will soon be released from these walls."

The Shadow waned and faded. Darkness settled back, and a sleep, profound and calm, fell over me.

The next day Mr. Stanton again visited me. He had received that morning a note from Mr. Margrave, stating that he had left L—— to pursue, in person, an investigation which he

had already commenced through another, affecting the man who had given evidence against me, and that, if his hopes should prove well founded, he trusted to establish my innocence, and convict the real murderer of Sir Philip Derval. In the research he thus volunteered, he had asked for, and obtained, the assistance of the policeman Waby, who, grateful to me for saving the life of his sister, had expressed a strong desire to be employed in my service.

Meanwhile, my most cruel assailant was my old college friend Richard Strahan. For Jeeves had spread abroad Strahan's charge of purloining the memoir which had been intrusted to me; and that accusation had done me great injury in public opinion, because it seemed to give probability to the only motive which ingenuity could ascribe to the foul deed imputed to me. That motive had been first suggested by Mr. Vigors. Cases are on record of men whose life had been previously blameless, who have committed a crime, which seemed to belie their nature, in the monomania of some intense desire. In Spain a scholar reputed of austere morals murdered and robbed a traveller for money in order to purchase books; books written, too, by Fathers of his Church! He was intent on solving some problem of theologcal casuistry. In France an antiquary esteemed not more for his learning than for amiable and gentle qualities, murdered his most intimate friend for the possession of a medal, without which his own collection was incomplete. These, and similar anecdotes, tending to prove how fatally any vehement desire, morbidly cherished, may suspend the normal operations of reason and conscience, were whispered about by Dr. Lloyd's vindictive partisan, and the inference drawn from them and applied to the assumptions against myself was the more credulously received, because of that over-refining speculation on motive and act which the shallow accept, in their eagerness to show how readily they understand the profound.

I was known to be fond of scientific, especially of chemical, experiments; to be eager in testing the truth of any novel invention. Strahan, catching hold of the magistrate's fantastic hypothesis, went about repeating anecdotes of the absorbing passion for analysis and discovery which had characterized me in youth as a medical student, and to which, indeed, I owed the precocious reputation I had obtained.

Sir Philip Derval, according not only to report, but to the direct testimony of his servant, had acquired in the course of his travels many secrets in natural science, especially as con-

nected with the healing art—his servant had deposed to the remarkable cures he had effected by the medicinals stored in the stolen casket—doubtless Sir Philip, in boasting of these medicinals in the course of our conversation, had excited my curiosity, inflamed my imagination, and thus, when I afterwards suddenly met him in a lone spot, a passionate impulse had acted on a brain heated into madness by curiosity and covetous desire.

All these suppositions, reduced into system, were corroborated by Strahan's charge that I had made away with the manuscript supposed to contain the explanations of the medical agencies employed by Sir Philip, and had sought to shelter my theft by a tale so improbable, that a man of my reputed talent could not have hazarded it if in his sound senses. I saw the web that had thus been spread around me by hostile prepossessions and ignorant gossip: how could the arts of Margrave scatter that web to the winds? I knew not, but I felt confidence in his promise and his power. Still, so great had been my alarm for Lilian, that the hope of clearing my own innocence was almost lost in my joy that Margrave, at least, was no longer in her presence, and that I had received his pledge to quit the town in which she lived.

Thus, hours rolled on hours, till, I think, on the third day from that night in which I had last beheld the mysterious Shadow, my door was hastily thrown open, a confused crowd presented itself at the threshold—the governor of the prison, the police superintendent, Mr. Stanton, and other familiar faces shut out from me since my imprisonment. I knew at the first glance that I was no longer an outlaw beyond the pale of human friendship. And proudly, sternly, as I had supported myself hitherto in solitude and suspense, when I felt warm hands clasping mine, heard joyous voices proffering congratulations, saw in the eyes of all that my innocence had been cleared, the revulsion of emotion was too strong for me—the room reeled on my sight—I fainted. I pass, as quickly as I can, over the explanations that crowded on me when I recovered, and that were publicly given in evidence in Court next morning. I had owed all to Margrave. It seems that he had construed to my favor the very supposition which had been bruited abroad to my prejudice. "For," said he, "it is conjectured that Fenwick committed the crime of which he is accused in the impulse of a disordered reason. That conjecture is based upon the probability that a madman alone could have committed a crime without adequate motive. But it

seems quite clear that the accused is not mad; and I see cause to suspect that the accuser is." Grounding this assumption on the current reports of the witness's manner and bearing since he had been placed under official surveillance, Margrave had commissioned the policeman, Waby, to make inquiries in the village to which the accuser asserted he had gone in quest of his relations, and Waby had, there, found persons who remembered to have heard that the two brothers named Walls lived less by the gains of the petty shop which they kept than by the proceeds of some property consigned to them as the nearest of kin to a lunatic who had once been tried for his life. Margrave had then examined the advertisements in the daily newspapers. One of them, warning the public against a dangerous maniac, who had effected his escape from an asylum in the west of England, caught his attention. To that asylum he had repaired.

There he learned that the patient advertised was one whose propensity was homicide, consigned for life to the asylum on account of a murder, for which he had been tried. The description of this person exactly tallied with that of the pretended American. The medical superintendent of the asylum, hearing all particulars from Margrave, expressed a strong persuasion that the witness was his missing patient, and had himself committed the crime of which he had accused another. If so, the superintendent undertook to coax from him the full confession of all the circumstances. Like many other madmen, and not least those whose propensity is to crime, the fugitive maniac was exceedingly cunning, treacherous, secret, and habituated to trick and stratagem. More subtle than even the astute in possession of all their faculties, whether to achieve his purpose or to conceal it, and fabricate appearances against another. But while, in ordinary conversation, he seemed rational enough to those who were not accustomed to study him, he had one hallucination which, when humored, led him always, not only to betray himself, but to glory in any crime proposed or committed. He was under the belief that he had made a bargain with Satan, who, in return for implicit obedience, would bear him harmless through all the consequences of such submission, and finally raise him to great power and authority. It is no unfrequent illusion of homicidal maniacs to suppose they are under the influence of the Evil One, or possessed by a Demon. Murderers have assigned as the only reason they themselves could give for their crime, that "the Devil got into them," and urged the deed. But the insane have, perhaps, no attribute

more in common than that of superweening self-esteem. The maniac who has been removed from a garret sticks straws in his hair and calls them a crown. So much does inordinate arrogance characterize mental aberration, that in the course of my own practice I have detected, in that infirmity, the certain symptom of insanity, long before the brain had made its disease manifest even to the most familiar kindred.

Morbid self-esteem accordingly pervaded the dreadful illusion by which the man I now speak of was possessed He was proud to be the protected agent of the Fallen Angel. And if that self-esteem were artfully appealed to he would exult superbly in the evil he held himself ordered to perform, as if a special prerogative, an official rank and privilege; then he would be led on to boast gleefully of thoughts which the most cynical of criminals, in whom intelligence was not ruined, would shrink from owning. Then he would reveal himself in all his deformity with as complacent and frank a self-glorying as some vain good man displays in parading his amiable sentiments and his beneficent deeds.

"If," said the superintendent, "this be the patient who has escaped from me, and if his propensity to homicide has been, in some way, directed towards the person who has been murdered, I shall not be with him a quarter of an hour before he will inform me how it happened, and detail the arts he employed in shifting his crime upon another—all will be told as minutely as a child tells the tale of some school-boy exploit, in which he counts on your sympathy, and feels sure of your applause."

Margrave brought this gentleman back to L——, took him to the mayor, who was one of my warmest supporters: the mayor had sufficient influence to dictate and arrange the rest. The superintendent was introduced to the room in which the pretended American was lodged. At his own desire a select number of witnesses were admitted with him—Margrave excused himself; he said candidly that he was too intimate a friend of mine to be an impartial listener to aught that concerned me so nearly.

The superintendent proved right in his suspicions, and verified his promises. My false accuser was his missing patient; the man recognized Dr. —— with no apparent terror, rather with an air of condescension, and in a very few minutes was led to tell his own tale, with a gloating complacency both at the agency by which he deemed himself exalted, and at the dexterous cunning with which he had acquitted himself of the task, that increased the horror of his narrative.

He spoke of the mode of his escape, which was extremely ingenious, but of which the details, long in themselves, did not interest me, and I understood them too imperfectly to repeat. He had encountered a seafaring traveller on the road, whom he had knocked down with a stone, and robbed of his glazed hat and pea-jacket, as well as of a small sum in coin, which last enabled him to pay his fare in a railway that conveyed him eighty miles away from the asylum. Some trifling remnant of this money still in his pocket, he then travelled on foot along the high road till he came to a town about twenty miles distant from L——; there he had stayed a day or two, and there he said "that the Devil had told him to buy a case-knife, which he did." "He knew by that order that the Devil meant him to do something great." "His Master," as he called the fiend, then directed him the road he should take. He came to L——, put up, as he had correctly stated before, at a small inn, wandered at night about the town, was surprised by the sudden storm, took shelter under the convent arch, overheard somewhat more of my conversation with Sir Philip than he had previously deposed—heard enough to excite his curiosity as to the casket: "While he listened his Master told him that he must get possession of that casket." Sir Philip had quitted the archway almost immediately after I had done so, and he would then have attacked him if he had not caught sight of a policeman going his rounds. He had followed Sir Philip to a house (Mr. Jeeves's). "His Master told him to wait and watch." He did so. When Sir Philip came forth, towards the dawn, he followed him, saw him enter a narrow street, came up to him, seized him by the arm, demanded all he had about him. Sir Philip tried to shake him off—struck at him. What follows, I spare the reader. The deed was done. He robbed the dead man, both of the casket and of the purse that he found in the pockets; had scarcely done so when he heard footsteps. He had just time to get behind the portico of a detached house at angles with the street, when I came up. He witnessed, from his hiding-place the brief conference between myself and the policemen, and when they moved on, bearing the body, stole unobserved away. He was going back towards the inn, when it occurred to him that it would be safer if the casket and purse were not about his person; that he asked his Master to direct him how to dispose of them; that his Master guided him to an open yard (a stone-mason's) at a very little distance from the inn: that in this yard there stood an old wych-elm tree, from the gnarled roots of which the earth was worn away, leaving

chinks and hollows, in one of which he placed the casket and purse, taking from the latter only two sovereigns and some silver, and then heaping loose mould over the hiding-place. That he then repaired to his inn, and left it late in the morning, on the pretence of seeking for his relations—persons, indeed, who really had been related to him, but of whose death years ago he was aware. He returned to L—— a few days afterwards, and in the dead of the night went to take up the casket and the money. He found the purse with its contents undisturbed; but the lid of the casket was unclosed. From the hasty glance he had taken of it before burying it, it had seemed to him firmly locked—he was alarmed lest some one had been to the spot. But his Master whispered to him not to mind, told him that he might now take the casket, and would be guided what to do with it; that he did so, and, opening the lid, found the casket empty; that he took the rest of the money out of the purse, but that he did not take the purse itself, for it had a crest and initials on it, which might lead to the discovery of what had been done; that he therefore left it in the hollow amongst the roots, heaping the mould over it as before; that, in the course of the day, he heard the people at the inn talk of the murder, and that his own first impulse was to get out of the town immediately, but that his Master "made him too wise for that," and bade him stay; that passing through the streets, he saw me come out of the sash-window door, go to a stable yard on the other side of the house, mount on horseback and ride away; that he observed the sash-door was left partially open; that he walked by it and saw the room empty; there was only a dead wall opposite; the place was solitary, unobserved; that his Master directed him to lift up the sash gently, enter the room, and deposit the knife and the casket in a large walnut-tree bureau which stood unlocked near the window. All that followed—his visit to Mr Vigors, his accusation against myself, his whole tale—was, he said, dictated by his Master, who was highly pleased with him, and promised to bring him safely through. And here he turned round with a hideous smile, as if for approbation of his notable cleverness and respect for his high employ.

Mr. Jeeves had the curiosity to request the keeper to inquire how, in what form, or in what manner, the Fiend appeared to the narrator, or conveyed his infernal dictates. The man at first refused to say; but it was gradually drawn from him that the Demon had no certain and invariable form; sometimes it appeared to him in the form of a rat, sometimes even of a leaf,

or a fragment of wood, or a rusty nail; but that his Master's voice always came to him distinctly, whatever shape he appeared in; only, he said, with an air of great importance, his Master, this time, had graciously condescended, ever since he left the asylum, to communicate with him in a much more pleasing and imposing aspect than he had ever done before—in the form of a beautiful youth, or, rather, like a bright rose-colored shadow, in which the features of a young man were visible, and that he had heard the voice more distinctly than usual, though in a milder tone, and seeming to come to him from a great distance.

After these revelations the man became suddenly disturbed. He shook from limb to limb; he seemed convulsed with terror; he cried out that he had betrayed the secret of his Master, who had warned him not to describe his appearance and mode of communication, or he would surrender his servant to the tormentors. Then the maniac's terror gave way to fury; his more direful propensity made itself declared; he sprang into the midst of his frightened listeners, seized Mr. Vigors by the throat, and would have strangled him but for the prompt rush of the superintendent and his satellites. Foaming at the mouth, and horribly raving, he was then manacled, a strait-waistcoat thrust upon him, and the group so left him in charge of his captors. Inquiries were immediately directed towards such circumstantial evidence as might corroborate the details he had so minutely set forth. The purse, recognized as Sir Philip's by the valet of the deceased, was found buried under the wych-elm. A policeman despatched, express, to the town in which the maniac declared the knife to have been purchased, brought back word that a cutler in the place remembered perfectly to have sold such a knife to a seafaring, man, and identified the instrument when it was shown to him. From the chink of a door ajar, in the wall opposite my sash window, a maid-servant, watching for her sweetheart (a journeyman carpenter, who habitually passed that way on going home to dine), had, though unobserved by the murderer, seen him come out of my window at a time that corresponded with the dates of his own story, though she had thought nothing of it at the moment. He might be a patient, or have called on business; she did not know that I was from home. The only point of importance not cleared up was that which related to the opening of the casket—the disappearance of the contents; the lock had been unquestionably forced. No one, however, could suppose that some third person had discovered the hiding-place and forced open the

casket to abstract its contents and then rebury it. The only probable supposition was, that the man himself had forced it open, and, deeming the contents of no value, had thrown them away before he had hidden the casket and purse, and, in the chaos of his reason, had forgotten that he had so done. Who could expect that every link in a madman's tale would be found integral and perfect? In short, little importance was attached to this solitary doubt. Crowds accompanied me to my door when I was set free, in open court, stainless—it was a triumphal procession. The popularity I had previously enjoyed, superseded for a moment by so horrible a charge, came back to me tenfold, as with the reaction of generous repentance for a momentary doubt. One man shared the public favor—the young man whose acuteness had delivered me from the peril, and cleared the truth from so awful a mystery; but Margrave had escaped from congratulation and compliment; he had gone on a visit to Strahan, at Derval Court.

Alone, at last, in the welcome sanctuary of my own home, what were my thoughts? Prominent amongst them all was that assertion of the madman, which had made me shudder when repeated to me: he had been guided to the murder and to all the subsequent proceedings by the luminous shadow of the beautiful youth—the Scin-Læca to which I had pledged myself. If Sir Philip Derval could be believed, Margrave was possessed of powers, derived from fragmentary recollections of a knowledge acquired in a former state of being, which would render his remorseless intelligence infinitely dire, and frustrate the endeavors of a reason, unassisted by similar powers, to thwart his designs or bring the law against his crimes. Had he then the arts that could thus influence the minds of others to serve his fell purposes, and achieve securely his own evil ends through agencies that could not be traced home to himself?

But for what conceivable purpose had I been subjected as a victim to influences as much beyond my control as the Fate or Demoniac Necessity of a Greek Myth? In the legends of the classic world some august sufferer is oppresed by powers more than mortal, but with an ethical if gloomy vindication of his chastisement—he pays the penalty of crime committed by his ancestors or himself, or he has braved, by arrogating equality with the gods, the mysterious calamity which the gods alone can inflict. But I, no descendant of Pelops, no Œdipus boastful of a wisdom which could interpret the enigmas of the Sphynx, while ignorant even of his own birth—what had I done to be singled out from the herd of men for trials and visi-

tations from the Shadowland of ghosts and sorcerers? It would be ludicrously absurd to suppose that Dr. Lloyd's dying imprecation could have had a prophetic effect upon my destiny; to believe that the pretences of mesmerizers were specially favored by Providence, and that to question their assumptions was an offence of profanation to be punished by exposure to preternatural agencies. There was not even that congruity between cause and effect which fable seeks in excuse for its inventions. Of all men living, I, unimaginative disciple of austere science, should be the last to become the sport of that witchcraft which even imagination reluctantly allows to the machinery of poets, and science casts aside into the mouldy lumber-room of obsolete superstition.

Rousing my mind from enigmas impossible to solve, it was with intense and yet most melancholy satisfaction that I turned to the image of Lilian, rejoicing, though with a thrill of awe, that the promise so mysteriously conveyed to my senses had here too, been already fulfilled—Margrave had left the town; Lilian was no longer subjected to his evil fascination. But an instinct told me that that fascination had already produced an effect adverse to all hope of happiness for me. Lilian's love for myself was gone. Impossible otherwise that she, in whose nature I had always admired that generous devotion which is more or less inseparable from the romance of youth, should have never conveyed to me one word of consolation in the hour of my agony and trial: that she who, till the last evening we had met, had ever been so docile, in the sweetness of a nature femininely submissive to my slightest wish, should have disregarded my solemn injunction, and admitted Margrave to acquaintance, nay, to familiar intimacy; at the very time, too, when to disobey my injunctions was to embitter my ordeal, and add her own contempt to the degradation imposed upon my honor! No, her heart must be wholly gone from me; her very nature wholly warped. An union between us had become impossible. My love for her remained unshattered; the more tender, perhaps, for a sentiment of compassion. But my pride was shocked, my heart was wounded. My love was not mean and servile. Enough for me to think that she would be at least saved from Margrave. *Her* life associated with his!—contemplation horrible and ghastly!—from that fate she was saved. Later, she would recover the effect of an influence happily so brief. She might form some new attachment, some new tie. But love once withdrawn is never to be restored—and her love was withdrawn from me. I had but to release her,

with my own lips, from our engagement—she would welcome that release. Mournful but firm in these thoughts and these resolutions, I sought Mrs. Ashleigh's house.

CHAPTER XLII.

It was twilight when I entered, unannounced (as had been my wont in our familiar intercourse), the quiet sitting-room in which I expected to find mother and child. But Lilian was there alone, seated by the open window, her hands crossed and drooping on her knee, her eyes fixed upon the darkening summer skies, in which the evening star had just stolen forth, bright and steadfast, near the pale sickle of a half-moon that was dimly visible, but gave as yet no light.

Let any lover imagine the reception he would expect to meet from his betrothed, coming into her presence after he had passed triumphant through a terrible peril to life and fame, and conceive what ice froze my blood, what anguish weighed down my heart when Lilian, turning towards me, rose not, spoke not—gazed at me heedlessly as if at some indifferent stranger—and—and——But no matter. I cannot bear to recall it even now, at the distance of years! I sat down beside her, and took her hand, without pressing it; it rested languidly, passively in mine—one moment; I dropped it then, with a bitter sigh.

"Lilian," I said quietly, "you love me no longer. Is it not so?"

She raised her eyes to mine, looked at me wistfully, and pressed her hand on her forehead, then said, in a strange voice: "Did I ever love you? What do you mean?"

"Lilian, Lilian, rouse yourself; are you not, while you speak, under some spell, some influence which you cannot describe nor account for?"

She paused a moment before she answered calmly: "No! Again I ask what do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Do you forget that we are betrothed? Do you forget how often, and how recently, our vows of affection and constancy have been exchanged?"

"No, I do not forget; but I must have deceived you and myself—"

"It is true, then, that you love me no more?"

"I suppose so."

"But, oh, Lilian, is it that your heart is only closed to me? Or is it—oh, answer truthfully—is it given to another? To

him—to him—against whom I warned you, whom I implored you not to receive? Tell me, at least, that your love is not gone to Margrave—"

"To him—love to him. Oh no—no—"

"What, then, is your feeling towards him?"

Lilian's face grew visibly paler, even in that dim light. "I know not," she said, almost in a whisper; "but it is partly awe—partly—"

"What!"

"Abhorrence!" she said, almost fiercely, and rose to her feet, with a wild defying start.

"If that be so," I said gently, "you would not grieve were you never again to see him—"

"But I shall see him again," she murmured, in a tone of weary sadness, and sank back once more into her chair.

"I think not," said I, "and I hope not. And now hear me and heed me, Lilian. It is enough for me, no matter what your feelings towards another, to learn from yourself that the affection you once professed for me is gone. I release you from your troth. If folks ask why we two henceforth separate the lives we had agreed to join, you may say, if you please, that you could not give your hand to a man who had known the taint of a felon's prison, even on a false charge. If that seems to you an ungenerous reason, we will leave it to your mother to find a better. Farewell! For your own sake I can yet feel happiness—happiness to hear that you do not love the man against whom I warn you still more solemnly than before! Will you not give me your hand in parting—and have I not spoken your own wish?"

She turned away her face, and resigned her hand to me in silence. Silently I held it in mine, and my emotions nearly stifled me. One symptom of regret, of reluctance, on her part, and I should have fallen at her feet, and cried: "Do not let us break a tie which our vows should have made indissoluble; heed not my offers—wrung from a tortured heart! You cannot have ceased to love me!" But no such symptom of relenting showed itself in her, and with a groan I left the room.

CHAPTER XLIII.

I WAS just outside the garden-door, when I felt an arm thrown round me, my cheek kissed and wetted with tears. Could it be Lilian? Alas, no! It was her mother's voice, that, between

laughing and crying, exclaimed hysterically: "This is joy, to see you again, and on these thresholds. I have just come from your house; I went there on purpose to congratulate you, and to talk to you about Lilian. But you have seen her?"

"Yes; I have but this moment left her. Come this way." I drew Mrs. Ashleigh back into the garden, along the old winding walk, which the shrubs concealed from view of the house. We sat down on a rustic seat where I had often sat with Lilian, midway between the house and the Monks' Well. I told the mother what had passed between me and her daughter; I made no complaint of Lilian's coldness and change; I did not hint at its cause. "Girls of her age will change," said I, "and all that now remains is for us two to agree on such a tale to our curious neighbors, as may rest the whole blame on me. Man's Name is of robust fibre; it could not push its way to a place in the world, if it could not bear, without sinking, the load idle tongues may lay on it. Not so Woman's Name—what is but gossip against Man, is scandal against Woman."

"Do not be rash, my dear Allen," said Mrs. Ashleigh, in great distress. "I feel for you, I understand you; in your case I might act as you do. I cannot blame you. Lilian is changed—changed unaccountably. Yet sure I am that the change is only on the surface, that her heart is really yours, as entirely and as faithfully as ever it was; and that later, when she recovers from the strange, dreamy kind of torpor which appears to have come over all her faculties and all her affections, she would awake with a despair which you cannot conjecture, to the knowledge that you had renounced her."

"I have not renounced her," said I impatiently; "I did but restore her freedom of choice. But pass by this now, and explain to me more fully the change in your daughter, which I gather from your words is not confined to me."

"I wished to speak of it before you saw her, and for that reason came to your house. It was on the morning in which we left her aunt's to return hither that I first noticed something peculiar in her look and manner. She seemed absorbed and absent, so much so that I asked her several times to tell me what made her so grave, but I could only get from her that she had had a confused dream which she could not recall distinctly enough to relate, but that she was sure that it boded evil. During the journey she became gradually more herself, and began to look forward with delight to the idea of seeing you again. Well, you came that evening. What passed between you and her you know best. You complained that she

slighted your request to shun all acquaintance with Mr. Margrave. I was surprised that, whether your wish were reasonable or not, she could have hesitated to comply with it. I spoke to her about it after you had gone, and she wept bitterly at thinking she had displeased you."

"She wept! You amaze me. Yet the next day what a note she returned to mine!"

"The next day the change in her became very visible to me. She told me, in an excited manner, that she was convinced she ought not to marry you. Then came, the following day, the news of your committal. I heard of it, but dared not break it to her. I went to our friend the mayor, to consult with him what to say, what do; and to learn more distinctly than I had done from terrified, incoherent servants, the rights of so dreadful a story. When I returned, I found, to my amazement, a young stranger in the drawing-room; it was Mr. Margrave—Miss Brabazon had brought him at his request. Lilian was in the room, too, and my astonishment was increased, when she said to me with a singular smile, vague but tranquil: 'I know all about Allen Fenwick; Mr. Margrave has told me all. He is a friend of Allen's. He says there is no cause for fear.' Mr. Margrave then apologized to me for his intrusion in a caressing, kindly manner, as if one of the family. He said he was so intimate with you that he felt that he could best break to Miss Ashleigh an information she might receive elsewhere, for that he was the only man in the town who treated the charge with ridicule. You know the wonderful charm of this young man's manner. I cannot explain to you how it was, but in a few moments I was as much at home with him as if he had been your brother. To be brief, having once come, he came constantly. He had moved, two days before you went to Derval Court, from his hotel to apartments in Mr. ——'s house, just opposite. We could see him on his balcony from our terrace; he would smile to us and come across. I did wrong in slighting your injunction, and suffering Lilian to do so. I could not help it, he was such a comfort to me—to her, too—in her tribulation. He alone had no doleful words, wore no long face; he alone was invariably cheerful. 'Everything,' he said, 'would come right in a day or two.'"

"And Lilian could not but admire this young man, he is so beaut ful."

"Beautiful? Well, perhaps. But if you have a jealous feeling you were never more mistaken. Lilian, I am convinced, does more than dislike him; he has inspired her with repug-

nance, with terror. And much as I own I like him, in his wild, joyous, careless, harmless way, do not think I flatter you if I say that Mr. Margrave is not the man to make any girl untrue to you—untrue to a lover with infinitely less advantages than you may pretend to. He would be an universal favorite, I grant; but there is something in him, or a something wanting in him, which makes liking and admiration stop short of love. I know not why; perhaps, because, with all his good humor, he is so absorbed in himself, so intensely egotistical, so light; were he less clever, I should say so frivolous. He could not make love, he could not say in the serious tone of a man in earnest, 'I love you.' He owned as much to me, and owned, too, that he knew not even what love was. As to myself—Mr. Margrave appears rich; no whisper against his character or his honor ever reached me. Yet were you out of the question, and were there no stain on his birth, nay, were he as high in rank and wealth as he is favored by Nature in personal advantages, I confess I could never consent to trust him with my daughter's fate. A voice at my heart would cry, 'No!' It may be an unreasonable prejudice, but I could not bear to see him touch Lilian's hand!"

"Did she never, then—never suffer him even to take her hand?"

"Never. Do not think so meanly of her as to suppose that she could be caught by a fair face, a graceful manner. Reflect; just before, she had refused, for your sake, Ashleigh Sumner, whom Lady Haughton said 'no girl in her senses could refuse'; and this change in Lilian really began before we returned to L——; before she had ever seen Mr. Margrave. I am convinced it is something in the reach of your skill as physician—it is on the nerves, the system. I will give you a proof of what I say, only do not betray me to her. It was during your imprisonment, the night before your release, that I was awakened by her coming to my bedside. She was sobbing as if her heart would break. 'Oh, mother, mother!' she cried, 'pity me, help me—I am so wretched.' 'What is the matter, darling?' 'I have been so cruel to Allen, and I know I shall be so again. I cannot help it. Do not question me; only if we are separated, if he cast me off, or I reject him, tell him some day—perhaps when I am in my grave—not to believe appearances; and that I, in my heart of hearts, never ceased to love him!'"

"She said that! You are not deceiving me?"

"Oh no! how can you think so?"

"There is hope still," I murmured; and I bowed my head upon my hands, hot tears forcing their way through the clasped fingers.

"One word more," said I; "you tell me that Lilian has a repugnance to this Margrave, and yet that she found comfort in his visits—a comfort that could not be wholly ascribed to cheering words he might say about myself, since it is all but certain that I was not, at that time, uppermost in her mind. Can you explain this apparent contradiction?"

"I cannot, otherwise than by a conjecture, which you would ridicule."

"I can ridicule nothing now. What is your conjecture?"

"I know how much you disbelieve in the stories one hears of animal magnetism and electro-biology, otherwise—"

"You think that Margrave exercises some power of that kind over Lilian? Has he spoken of such a power?"

"Not exactly; but he said that he was sure Lilian possessed a faculty that he called by some hard name, not clairvoyance, but a faculty, which he said, when I asked him to explain, was akin to prevision—to second sight. Then he talked of the priestesses who had administered the ancient oracles. Lilian, he said, reminded him of them, with her deep eyes and mysterious smile."

"And Lilian heard him? What said she?"

"Nothing; she seemed in fear while she listened."

"He did not offer to try any of those arts practised by professional mesmerists and other charlatans?"

"I thought he was about to do so, but I forestalled him; saying I never would consent to any experiment of that kind, either on myself or my daughter."

"And he replied—?"

"With his gay laugh, 'that I was very foolish; that a person possessed of such a faculty as he attributed to Lilian would, if the faculty were developed, be an invaluable adviser.' He would have said more, but I begged him to desist. Still I fancy at times—do not be angry—that he does somehow or other bewitch her, unconsciously to herself; for she always knows when he is coming. Indeed, I am not sure that he does not bewitch myself, for I by no means justify my conduct in admitting him to an intimacy so familiar, and in spite of your wish; I have reproached myself, resolved to shut my door on him, or to show by my manner that his visits were unwelcome; yet when Lilian has said, in the drowsy, lethargic tone which has come into her voice (her voice naturally earnest and im-

pressive, though always low), 'Mother, he will be here in two minutes—I wish to leave the room and cannot'—I, too, have felt as if something constrained me against my will; as if, in short, I were under that influence which Mr. Vigors—whom I will never forgive for his conduct to you—would ascribe to mesmerism. But will you not come in and see Lilian again?"

"No, not to-night; but watch and heed her, and if you see aught to make you honestly believe that she regrets the rupture of the old tie from which I have released her—why, you know, Mrs. Ashleigh, that—that—" My voice failed—I wrung the good woman's hand, and went my way.

I had always till then considered Mrs. Ashleigh—if not as Mrs. Poyntz described her, "commonplace weak," still of an intelligence somewhat below mediocrity. I now regarded her with respect as well as grateful tenderness; her plain sense had divined, what all my boasted knowledge had failed to detect in my earlier intimacy with Margrave, viz., that in him there was a something present, or a something wanting, which forbade love and excited fear. Young, beautiful, wealthy, seemingly blameless in life as he was, she would not have given her daughter's hand to him!

CHAPTER XLIV.

The next day my house was filled with visitors. I had no notion that I had so many friends. Mr. Vigors wrote me a generous and handsome letter, owning his prejudices against me on account of his sympathy with poor Dr. Lloyd, and begging my pardon for what he now felt to have been harshness, if not distorted justice. But what most moved me was the entrance of Strahan, who rushed up to me with the heartiness of old college days. "Oh, my dear Allen, can you ever forgive me; that I should have disbelieved your word—should have suspected you of abstracting my poor cousin's memoir?"

"Is it found, then?"

"Oh, yes; you must thank Margrave. He, clever fellow, you know, came to me on a visit yesterday. He put me at once on the right scent. Only guess; but you never can! It was that wretched old housekeeper who purloined the manuscript. You remember she came into the room while you were looking at the memoir. She heard us talk about it; her curiosity was roused; she longed to know the history of her old master, under his own hand; she could not sleep; she heard

me go up to bed; she thought you might leave the book on the table when you, too, went to rest. She stole downstairs, peeped through the keyhole of the library, saw you asleep, the book lying before you, entered, took away the book softly, meant to glance at its contents and to return it. You were sleeping so soundly she thought you would not wake for an hour; she carried it into the library, leaving the door open, and there began to pore over it; she stumbled first on one of the passages in Latin; she hoped to find some part in plain English, turned over the leaves, putting her candle close to them, for the old woman's eyes were dim, when she heard you make some sound in your sleep. Alarmed, she looked round; you were moving uneasily in your seat, and muttering to yourself. From watching you she was soon diverted by the consequence of her own confounded curiosity and folly. In moving, she had unconsciously brought the poor manuscript close to the candle; the leaves caught the flame; her own cap and hand burning first made her aware of the mischief done. She threw down the book; her sleeve was in flames; she had first to tear off the sleeve, which was, luckily for her, not sewn to her dress. By the time she recovered presence of mind to attend to the book, half its leaves were reduced to tinder. She did not dare then to replace what was left of the manuscript on your table; returned with it to her room, hid it, and resolved to keep her own secret. I should never have guessed it; I had never even spoken to her of the occurrence; but when I talked over the disappearance of the book to Margrave last night, and expressed my disbelief of your story, he said in his merry way: 'But do you think that Fenwick is the only person curious about your cousin's odd ways and strange history? Why, every servant in the household would have been equally curious. You have examined your servants, of course?' 'No, I never thought of it.' 'Examine them now, then. Examine especially that old housekeeper. I observe a great change in her manner since I came here, weeks ago, to look over the house. She has something on her mind—I see it in her eyes.' Then it occurred to me, too, that the woman's manner had altered, and that she seemed always in a tremble and a fidget. I went at once to her room, and charged her with stealing the book. She fell on her knees, and told the whole story as I have told it you, and as I shall take care to tell it to all to whom I have so foolishly blabbed my yet more foolish suspicions of yourself. But can you forgive me, old friend?"

"Heartily, heartily! And the book is burned?"

"See"; and he produced a mutilated manuscript. Strange, the part burned—reduced indeed, to tinder—was the concluding part that related to Haroun—to Grayle: no vestige of that part was left; the earlier portions were scorched and mutilated, though in some places still decipherable; but as my eye hastily ran over those places, I saw only mangled sentences of the experimental problems which the writer had so minutely elaborated.

"Will you keep the manuscript as it is, and as long as you like?" said Strahan.

"No, no; I will have nothing more to do with it. Consult some other man of science. And so this is the old woman's whole story? No accomplice—none? No one else shared her curiosity and her task?"

"No. Oddly enough, though, she made much the same excuse for her pitiful folly that the madman made for his terrible crime; she said, 'the Devil put it into her head.' Of course he did, as he puts everything wrong into any one's head. That does not mend the matter."

"How! did she, too, say she saw a Shadow and heard a voice?"

"No; not such a liar as that, and not mad enough for such a lie. But she said that when she was in bed, thinking over the book, something irresistible urged her to get up and go down into the study; swore she felt something lead her by the hand; swore, too, that when she first discovered the manuscript was not in English, something whispered in her to turn over the leaves and approach them to the candle. But I had no patience to listen to all this rubbish. I sent her out of the house, bag and baggage. But, alas! is this to be the end of all my wise cousin's grand discoveries?"

True, of labors that aspired to bring into the chart of science new worlds, of which even the traditionary rumor was but a voice from the land of fable—nought left but broken vestiges of a daring footstep. The hope of a name imperishable amidst the loftiest hierarchy of Nature's secret temple, with all the pomp of recorded experiment, that applied to the mysteries of Egypt and Chaldæa the inductions of Bacon, the tests of Liebig—was there nothing left of this but what, here and there, some puzzled student might extract, garbled, mutilated, perhaps unintelligible, from shreds of sentences, wrecks of problems! O mind of man, can the works, on which thou wouldst found immortality below, be annulled into smoke and tinder by an inch of candle in the hand of an old woman!

When Strahan left me, I went out, but not yet to visit patients. I stole through bypaths into the fields; I needed solitude to bring my thoughts into shape and order. What was delusion, and what not? Was I right or the Public? Was Margrave really the most innocent and serviceable of human beings, kindly affectionate, employing a wonderful acuteness for benignant ends? Was I, in truth, indebted to him for the greatest boon one man can bestow on another? For life rescued, for fair name justified? Or had he, by some demoniac sorcery, guided the hand of the murderer against the life of the person who alone could imperil his own? Had he, by the same dark spells, urged the woman to the act that had destroyed the only record of his monstrous being—the only evidence that I was not the sport of an illusion in the horror with which he inspired me?

But if the latter supposition could be admissible, did he use his agents only to betray them afterwards to exposure, and that without any possible clue to his own detection as the instigator? Then, there came over me confused recollections of tales of mediæval witchcraft, which I had read in boyhood. Were there not on judicial record, attestation and evidence solemn and circumstantial, of powers analogous to those now exercised by Margrave? Of sorcerers instigating to sin through influences ascribed to Demons—making their apparitions glide through guarded walls, their voices heard from afar in the solitude of dungeons or monastic cells? subjugating victims to their will, by means which no vigilance could have detected, if the victims themselves had not confessed the witchcraft that had ensnared—courting a sure and infamous death in that confession—preferring such death to a life so haunted? Were stories so gravely set forth in the pomp of judicial evidence, and in the history of times comparatively recent, indeed, to be massed pell-mell together, as a *moles indigesta* of senseless superstition—all the witnesses to be deemed liars? All the victims and tools of the sorcerers, lunatics? All the examiners or judges, with their solemn gradations—lay and clerical—from Commissions of Inquiry to Courts of Appeal—to be despised for credulity, loathed for cruelty; or, amidst records so numerous, so imposingly attested, were there the fragments of a terrible truth? And had our ancestors been so unwise in those laws we now deem so savage, by which the world was rid of scourges more awful and more potent than the felon with his candid dagger? Fell instigators of the evil in men's secret hearts—shaping into action the vague, half-formed desire,

and guiding with agencies, impalpable, unseen, their spell-bound instruments of calamity and death.

Such were the gloomy questions that I—by repute, the sternest advocate of common-sense against fantastic errors, by profession, the searcher into flesh and blood, and tissue, and nerve, and sinew, for the causes of all that disease the mechanism of the universal human frame,—I, self-boasting physician, sceptic, philosopher, materialist—revolved, not amidst gloomy pines, under grim winter skies, but as I paced slow through laughing meadows, and by the banks of merry streams in the ripeness of the golden August: the hum of insects in the fragrant grass, the flutter of birds amid the delicate green of boughs checkered by playful sunbeams and gentle shadows, and ever in sight of the resorts of busy work-day man. Walls, roof-tops, church-spires rising high. There, white and modern, the handwriting of our race, in this practical nineteenth century, on its square plain masonry and Doric shafts, the Town Hall, central in the animated market-place. And I—I—prying into long-neglected corners and dust-holes of memory for what my reason had flung there as worthless rubbish; reviving the jargon of French law, in the *proces verbal*, against a Gille de Retz, or an Urbain Grandier, and sifting the equity of sentences on witchcraft!

Bursting the links of this ghastly soliloquy with a laugh at my own folly, I struck into a narrow path that led back towards the city, by a quiet and rural suburb: the path wound on through a wide and solitary churchyard, at the base of the Abbey Hill. Many of the former dwellers on that eminence now slept in the lowly burial-ground at its foot. And the place, mournfully decorated with the tombs which still jealously mark distinctions of rank amidst the levelling democracy of the grave, was kept trim with the care which comes half from piety, and half from pride.

I seated myself on a bench, placed between the clipped yew-trees that bordered the path from the entrance to the church porch; deeming vaguely that my own perplexing thoughts might imbibe a quiet from the quiet of the place.

"And oh," I murmured to myself, "oh that I had one bosom friend to whom I might freely confide all these torturing riddles which I cannot solve—one who could read my heart; light up its darkness; exorcise its spectres—one in whose wisdom I could welcome a guide through the Nature which now suddenly changes her aspect, opening out from the walls with which I had fenced and enclosed her as mine own formal gar-

den; all her pathways, therein, trimmed to my footstep; all her blooms grouped and harmonized to my own taste in color; all her groves, all her caverns, but the soothing retreats of a Muse or a Science; opening out—opening out, desert on desert, into clueless and measureless space! Gone is the garden? Were its confines too narrow for Nature? Be it so! The Desert replaces the garden, but where ends the Desert? Reft from my senses are the laws which gave order and place to their old questionless realm. I stand lost and appalled amidst Chaos. Did my Mind misconstrue the laws it deemed fixed and immutable? Be it so! But still Nature cannot be lawless; Creation is not a Chaos. If my senses deceive me in some things, they are still unerring in others; if thus, in some things, fallacious, still, in other things, truthful. Are there within me senses finer than those I have cultured, or without me vistas of knowledge which instincts, apart from my senses, divine? So long as I deal with the Finite alone, my senses suffice me; but when the Infinite is obtruded upon me, there are my senses faithless deserters? If so, is there aught else in my royal resources of Man—whose ambition it is, from the first dawn of his glory as Thinker, to invade, and to subjugate Nature—is there aught else to supply the place of those traitors the senses, who report to my Reason, their judge and their sovereign, as truths, seen and heard, tales which my Reason forfeits her sceptre if she does not disdain as lies? Oh, for a friend! Oh, for a guide!

And as I so murmured, my eye fell upon the form of a kneeling child—at the farther end of the burial-ground, beside a grave with its new headstone gleaming white amidst the older moss-grown tombs,—a female child, her head bowed, her hands clasped. I could see but the outline of her small form in its sable dress—an infant beside the dead.

My eye and my thoughts were turned from that silent figure, too absorbed in my own restless tumult of doubt and dread, for sympathy with the grief or the consolation of a kneeling child. And yet I should have remembered that tomb! Again I murmured with a fierce impatience: "Oh, for a friend! Oh, for a guide!"

I heard steps on the walk under the yews; and an old man came in sight, slightly bent, with long gray hair, but still with enough of vigor for years to come—in his tread, firm, though slow; in the unshrunken muscle of his limbs and the steady light of his clear blue eye. I started. Was it possible? That countenance, marked, indeed, with the lines of laborious

thought, but sweet in the mildness of humanity, and serene in the peace of conscience! I could not be mistaken. Julius Faber was before me. The profound pathologist, to whom my own proud self-esteem acknowledged inferiority, without humiliation; the generous benefactor to whom I owed my own smoothed entrance into the arduous road of fame and fortune. I had longed for a friend, a guide; what I sought stood suddenly at my side.

CHAPTER XLV.

EXPLANATION, on Faber's part, was short and simple. The nephew whom he designed as the heir to his wealth had largely outstripped the liberal allowance made to him—had incurred heavy debts and in order to extricate himself from the debts, had plunged into ruinous speculations. Faber had come back to England to save his heir from prison or outlawry, at the expense of more than three-fourths of the destined inheritance. To add to all, the young man had married a young lady without fortune; the uncle only heard of this marriage on arriving in England. The spendthrift was hiding from his creditors in the house of his father-in-law, in one of the western counties. Faber there sought him; and, on becoming acquainted with his wife, grew reconciled to the marriage, and formed hopes of his nephew's future redemption. He spoke, indeed, of the young wife with great affection. She was good and sensible; willing and anxious to encounter any privation by which her husband might retrieve the effects of his folly. "So," said Faber, "on consultation with this excellent creature, for my poor nephew is so broken down by repentance, that others must think for him how to exalt repentance into reform, my plans were determined. I shall remove my prodigal from all scenes of temptation. He has youth, strength, plenty of energy, hitherto misdirected. I shall take him from the Old World into the New. I have decided on Australia. The fortune still left to me, small here, will be ample capital there. It is not enough to maintain us separately, so we must all live together. Besides, I feel that, though I have neither the strength nor the experience which could best serve a young settler on a strange soil, still, under my eye, my poor boy will be at once more prudent and more persevering. We sail next week."

Faber spoke so cheerfully that I knew not how to express compassion; yet, at his age, after a career of such prolonged and distinguished labor, to resign the ease and comforts of the

civilized state for the hardships and rudeness of an infant colony, seemed to me a dreary prospect; and, as delicately, as tenderly as I could to one whom I loved and honored as a father, I placed at his disposal the fortune which, in great part, I owed to him—pressing him at least to take from it enough to secure to himself, in his own country, a home suited to his years and worthy of his station. He rejected all my offers, however earnestly urged on him, with his usual modest and gentle dignity; and assuring me that he looked forward with great interest to a residence in lands new to his experience, and affording ample scope for the hardy enjoyments which had always most allured his tastes, he hastened to change the subject.

"And who, think you, is the admirable helpmate my scapegrace has had the saving good luck to find? A daughter of the worthy man who undertook the care of poor Dr. Lloyd's orphans—the orphans who owed so much to your generous exertions to secure a provision for them—and that child, now just risen from her father's grave, is my pet companion, my darling ewe-lamb—Dr. Lloyd's daughter Amy."

Here the child joined us, quickening her pace as she recognized the old man, and nestling to his side as she glanced wistfully towards myself. A winning, candid, lovable child's face, somewhat melancholy, somewhat more thoughtful than is common to the face of childhood, but calm, intelligent, and ineffably mild. Presently she stole from the old man, and put her hand in mine:

"Are you not the kind gentleman who came to see Him that night when he passed away from us, and who, they all say at home, was so good to my brothers and me? Yes I recollect you now." And she put her pure face to mine, wooing me to kiss it.

I kind! I good! I—I! Alas! she little knew, little guessed, the wrathful imprecation her father had bequeathed to me that fatal night!

I did not dare to kiss Dr. Lloyd's orphan daughter, but my tears fell over her hand. She took them as signs of pity, and, in her infant thankfulness, silently kissed me.

"Oh, my friend!" I murmured to Faber, "I have much that I yearn to say to you—alone—alone—come to my house with me; be at least my guest as long as you stay in this town."

"Willingly," said Faber, looking at me more intently than he had done before, and, with the true eye of the practised Healer, at once soft and penetrating.

He rose, took my arm, and whispering a word in the ear of

the little girl, she went on before us, turning her head, as she gained the gate, for another look at her father's grave. As we walked to my house, Julius Faber spoke to me much of this child. Her brothers were all at school; she was greatly attached to his nephew's wife; she had become yet more attached to Faber himself, though on so short an acquaintance; it had been settled that she was to accompany the emigrants to Australia.

"There," said he, "the sum that some munificent, but unknown, friend of her father has settled on her, will provide her no mean dower for a colonist's wife, when the time comes for her to bring a blessing to some other hearth than ours." He went on to say that she had wished to accompany him to L—— in order to visit her father's grave before crossing the wide seas; "and she has taken such fond care of me all the way, that you might fancy I were the child of the two. I come back to this town, partly to dispose of a few poor houses in it which still belong to me, principally to bid you farewell before quitting the Old World, no doubt forever. So, on arriving to-day, I left Amy by herself in the churchyard while I went to your house, but you were from home. And now I must congratulate you on the reputation you have so rapidly acquired, which has even surpassed my predictions."

"You are aware," said I falteringly, "of the extraordinary charge from which that part of my reputation dearest to all men has just emerged?"

He had but seen a short account in a weekly journal, written after my release. He asked details, which I postponed.

Reaching my home, I hastened to provide for the comfort of my two unexpected guests; strove to rally myself—to be cheerful. Not till night, when Julius Faber and I were alone together, did I touch on what was weighing at my heart. Then, drawing to his side, I told him all—all of which the substance is herein written, from the death-scene in Dr. Lloyd's chamber to the hour in which I had seen Dr. Lloyd's child at her father's grave. Some of the incidents and conversations which had most impressed me, I had already committed to writing, in the fear that, otherwise, my fancy might forge for its own thraldom the links of reminiscence which my memory might let fall from its chain. Faber listened with a silence only interrupted by short pertinent questions; and when I had done, he remained thoughtful for some moments; then the great physician replied thus:

"I take for granted your conviction of the reality of all you

tell me, even of the Luminous Shadow, of the bodiless Voice; but, before admitting the reality itself, we must abide by the old maxim, not to accept as cause to effect those agencies which belong to the Marvellous, when causes less improbable for the effect can be rationally conjectured. In this case are there not such causes? Certainly there are—"

"There are?"

"Listen; you are one of those men who attempt to stifle their own imagination. But in all completed intellect, imagination exists, and will force its way; deny it healthful vents, and it may stray into morbid channels. The death-room of Dr. Lloyd deeply impressed your heart, far more than your pride would own. This is clear, from the pains you took to exonerate your conscience in your generosity to the orphans. As the heart was moved, so was the imagination stirred; and, unaware to yourself, prepared for much that subsequently appealed to it. Your sudden love, conceived in the very grounds of the house so associated with recollections in themselves strange and romantic; the peculiar temperament and nature of the girl to whom your love was attracted; her own visionary beliefs, and the keen anxiety which infused into your love a deeper poetry of sentiment—all insensibly tended to induce the imagination to dwell on the Wonderful; and, in overstriving to reconcile each rarer phenomenon to the most positive laws of Nature, your very intellect could discover no solution but in the Preternatural.

"You visit a man who tells you he has seen Sir Philip Derval's ghost: on that very evening, you hear a strange story, in which Sir Philip's name is mixed up with a tale of murder, implicating two mysterious pretenders to magic—Louis Grayle, and the sage of Aleppo. The tale so interests your fancy that even the glaring impossibility of a not unimportant part of it escapes your notice,—viz., the account of a criminal trial in which the circumstantial evidence was more easily attainable than in all the rest of the narrative, but which could not legally have taken place as told. Thus it is whenever the mind begins, unconsciously, to admit the shadow of the Supernatural; the Obvious is lost to the eye that plunges its gaze into the Obscure. Almost immediately afterwards you become acquainted with a young stranger, whose traits of character interest and perplex, attract yet revolt you. All this time you are engaged in a physiological work which severely tasks the brain, and in which you examine the intricate question of soul distinct from mind.

"And, here, I can conceive a cause deep-hid amongst what metaphysicians would call latent associations, for a train of thought which disposed you to accept the fantastic impressions afterwards made on you by the scene in the Museum and the visionary talk of Sir Philip Derval. Doubtless, when, at college, you first studied metaphysical speculation, you would have glanced over Beattie's Essay on Truth as one of the works written in opposition to your favorite, David Hume."

"Yes I read the book, but I have long since forgotten its arguments."

"Well, in that essay, Beattie * cites the extraordinary instance of Simon Browne, a learned and pious clergyman, who seriously disbelieved the existence of his own soul; and imagined that, by interposition of Divine power, his soul was annulled, and nothing left but a principle of animal life, which he held in common with the brutes! When, years ago, a thoughtful, imaginative student, you came on that story, probably enough you would have paused, revolved in your own mind and fancy what kind of a creature a man might be, if, retaining human life and merely human understanding, he was deprived of the powers and properties which reasoners have ascribed to the existence of soul. Something in this young man, unconsciously to yourself, revives that forgotten train of meditative ideas. His dread of death as the final cessation of being, his brute-like want of sympathy with his kind, his incapacity to comprehend the motives which carry man on to scheme and to build for a future that extends beyond his grave, all start up before you at the very moment your reason is overtasked, your imagination fevered, in seeking the solution of problems which, to a philosophy based upon your system, must always remain insoluble. The young man's conversation not only thus excites your fancies, it disturbs your affections. He speaks not only of drugs that renew youth, but of charms that secure love. You tremble for your Lilian while you hear him! And the brain thus tasked, the imagination thus inflamed, the heart thus agitated, you are presented to Sir Philip Derval, whose ghost your patient had supposed he saw weeks ago.

"This person, a seeker after an occult philosophy, which had possibly acquainted him with some secrets in nature beyond the pale of our conventional experience, though, when analyzed, they might prove to be quite reconcilable with sober science, startles you with an undefined mysterious charge against the

* Beattie's "Essay on Truth," part i. c. ii. 3. The story of Simon Browne is to be found in The Adventurer.

young man who had previously seemed to you different from ordinary mortals. In a room stored with the dead things of the brute soulless world, your brain becomes intoxicated with the fumes of some vapor which produces effects not uncommon in the superstitious practices of the East; your brain, thus excited, brings distinctly before you the vague impressions it had before received. Margrave becomes identified with the Louis Grayle of whom you had previously heard an obscure and legendary tale, and all the anomalies in his character are explained by his being that which you had contended, in your physiological work, it was quite possible for man to be, viz., mind and body without soul! You were startled by the monster which man would be were your own theory possible; and in order to reconcile the contradictions in this very monster, you account for knowledge and for powers that mind without soul could not have attained, by ascribing to this prodigy broken memories of a former existence, demon attributes from former proficiency in evil magic. My friend, there is nothing here which your own study of morbid idiosyncrasies should not suffice to solve."

"So then," said I, "you would reduce all that have affected my senses as realities into the deceit of illusions? But," I added, in a whisper, terrified by my own question, "do not physiologists agree in this: viz., that though illusory phantasms may haunt the sane as well as the insane, the sane know that they are only illusions, and the insane do not?"

"Such a distinction," answered Faber, "is far too arbitrary and rigid for more than a very general and qualified acceptance. Müller, indeed, who is, perhaps, the highest authority on such a subject, says, with prudent reserve: 'When a person who is not insane sees spectres and believes them to be real, his intellect must be imperfectly exercised.' * He would, indeed, be a bold physician who maintained that every man who believed he had really seen a ghost was of unsound mind. In Dr. Abercrombie's interesting account of spectral illusions, he tells us of a servant-girl who believed she saw, at the foot of her bed, the apparition of Curran, in a sailor's jacket and an immense pair of whiskers.† No doubt the spectre was an illusion, and Dr. Abercrombie very ingeniously suggests the association of ideas by which the apparition was conjured up with the grotesque adjuncts of the jacket and the whiskers; but the servant-girl, in believing the reality of the apparition, was cer-

* Müller's "Physiology of the Senses," p. 394.

† Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers, p. 281. (15th edition.)

tainly not insane. When I read in the American public journals* of 'spirit manifestations,' in which large numbers of persons, of at least the average degree of education, declare that they have actually witnessed various phantasms, much more extraordinary than all which you have confided to me, and arrive, at once, at the conclusion that they are thus put into direct communication with departed souls, I must assume that they are under an illusion, but I should be utterly unwarranted in supposing that, because they credited that illusion, they were insane. I should only say with Müller, that in their reasoning on the phenomena presented to them, 'their intellect was imperfectly exercised.' And an impression made on the senses, being in itself sufficiently rare to excite our wonder, may be strengthened till it takes the form of a positive fact, by various coincidences which are accepted as corroborative testimony, yet which are, nevertheless, nothing more than coincidences found in every-day matters of business, but only emphatically noticed when we can exclaim, 'How astonishing!' In your case such coincidences have been, indeed, very signal, and might well aggravate the perplexities into which your reason was thrown. Sir Philip Derval's murder, the missing casket, the exciting nature of the manuscript, in which a superstitious interest is already enlisted by your expectation to find in it the key to the narrator's boasted powers, and his reasons for the astounding denunciation of the man whom you suspect to be his murderer; in all this there is much to confirm, nay, to cause, an illusion, and for that very reason, when examined by strict laws of evidence, in all this there is but additional proof that the illusion was—only illusion. Your affections contribute to strengthen your fancy in its war on your reason. The girl you so passionately love develops, to your disquietude and terror, the visionary temperament which, at her age, is ever liable to fantastic caprices. She hears Margrave's song, which, you say, has a wildness of charm that affects and thrills even you. Who does not know the power of music? And of all music, there is none so potential as that of the human voice. Thus, in some languages, charm and song are identical expressions; and even when a critic, in our own sober newspapers, extols a Malibran or a Grisi, you may be sure that he will call her 'enchantress.' Well, this lady, your betrothed, in whom the nervous system is extremely impressionable, hears a voice which, even to your ear, is strange-

* At the date of Faber's conversation with Allen Fenwick, the (so-called) spirit manifestations had not spread from America over Europe. But if they had, Faber's views would, no doubt, have remained the same.

ly melodious, and sees a form and face which, even to your eye, are endowed with a singular character of beauty. Her fancy is impressed by what she thus hears and sees; and impressed the more because, by a coincidence not very uncommon, a face like that which she beholds has before been presented to her in a dream or a revery. In the nobleness of genuine, confiding, reverential love, rather than impute to your beloved a levity of sentiment that would seem to you a treason, you accept the chimera of 'magical fascination.' In this frame of mind you sit down to read the memoir of a mystical enthusiast. Do you begin now to account for the Luminous Shadow? A dream! And a dream no less because your eyes were open and you believed yourself awake. The diseased imagination resembles those mirrors which, being themselves distorted, represent distorted pictures as correct.

"And even this Memoir of Sir Philip Derval's—can you be quite sure that you actually read the part which relates to Haroun and Louis Grayle? You say that, while perusing the manuscript, you saw the Luminous Shadow and became insensible. The old woman says you were fast asleep. May you not really have fallen into a slumber, and in that slumber have dreamed the parts of the tale that relate to Grayle? Dreamed that you beheld the Shadow? Do you remember what is said so well by Dr. Abercrombie, to authorize the explanation I suggest to you: 'A person under the influence of some strong mental impression falls asleep for a few seconds, perhaps without being sensible of it: some scene or person appears in a dream, and he starts up under the conviction that it was a spectral appearance.' " *

"But," said I, "the apparition was seen by me again, and when, certainly, I was not sleeping."

"True; and who should know better than a physician so well read as yourself that a spectral illusion once beheld is *al-*

* Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers, p. 278. (15th edition.) This author, not more to be admired for his intelligence than his candor, and who is entitled to praise for a higher degree of original thought than that to which he modestly pretends, relates a curious anecdote illustrating "the analogy between dreaming and spectral illusion, which he received from the gentleman to whom it occurred—an eminent medical friend": "Having sat up late one evening, under considerable anxiety for one of his children, who was ill, he fell asleep in his chair, and had a frightful dream, in which the prominent figure was an immense baboon. He awoke with the fright, got up instantly, and walked to a table which was in the middle of the room. He was then quite awake, and quite conscious of the articles around him; but close by the wall in the end of the apartment he distinctly saw the baboon making the same grimaces which he had seen in his dream; and this spectre continued visible for about half a minute." Now, a man who saw only a baboon would be quite ready to admit that it was but an optical illusion; but if, instead of a baboon, he had seen an intimate friend, and that friend, by some coincidence of time, had died about that date, he would be a very strong-minded man if he admitted for the mystery of seeing his friend the same natural solution which he would readily admit for seeing a baboon.

ways apt to return again in the same form? Thus, Goethe was long haunted by one image; the phantom of a flower unfolding itself, and developing new flowers.* Thus, one of our most distinguished philosophers tells us of a lady known to himself, who would see her husband, hear him move and speak, when he was not even in the house.† But instances of the facility with which phantasms, once admitted, repeat themselves to the senses, are numberless. Many are recorded by Hibbert and Abercrombie, and every physician in extensive practice can add largely, from his own experience, to the list. Intense self-concentration is, in itself, a mighty magician. The magicians of the East inculcate the necessity of fast, solitude, and meditation for the due development of their imaginary powers. And I have no doubt with effect; because fast, solitude, and meditation—in other words, thought or fancy intensely concentred, will both raise apparitions and produce the invoker's belief in them. Spinello, striving to conceive the image of Lucifer for his picture of the Fallen Angels, was at last actually haunted by the Shadow of the Fiend. Newton himself has been subjected to a phantom, though to him, Son of Light, the spectre presented was that of the sun! You remember the account that Newton gives to Locke of this visionary appearance. He says that 'though he had looked at the sun with his right eye only, and *not* with the left, yet his fancy began to make an impression upon his left eye as well as his right, for if he shut his right and looked upon the clouds, or a book, or any bright object with his left eye, he could see the sun almost as plain as with the right, if he did but *intend* his fancy a little while on it'; nay, 'for some months after, as often as he began to meditate on the phenomena, the spectrum of the sun began to return, even though he lay in bed at midnight, with his curtains drawn!' Seeing, then, how any vivid impression once made will recur, what wonder that you should behold in your prison the Shining Shadow that had first startled you in a wizard's chamber when poring over the records of a murdered visionary? The more minutely you analyze your own hallucinations—pardon me the word—the more they assume the usual characteristics of a dream; contradictory, illogical, even in the marvels they represent. Can any two persons be more totally unlike each other, not merely as to form and years, but as to all the elements of character, than the Grayle of whom you

* See Müller's observations on this phenomenon, "Physiology of the Senses," Baley's translation, p. 1395.

† Sir David Brewster's "Letters on Natural Magic," p. 39.

read, or believe you read, and the Margrave in whom you evidently think that Grayle is existent still? The one represented, you say, as gloomy, saturnine, with vehement passions, but with an original grandeur of thought and will, consumed by an internal remorse; the other you paint to me as a joyous and wayward darling of Nature, acute yet frivolous, free from even the ordinary passions of youth, taking delight in innocent amusements, incapable of continuous study, without a single pang of repentance for the crimes you so fancifully impute to him. And now, when your suspicions, so romantically conceived, are dispelled by positive facts, now, when it is clear that Margrave neither murdered Sir Philip Derval nor abstracted the memoir, you still, unconsciously to yourself, draw on your imagination in order to excuse the suspicion your pride of intellect declines to banish, and suppose that this youthful sorcerer tempted the madman to the murder, the woman to the theft—"

"But you forget the madman said 'that he was led on by the Luminous Shadow of a beautiful youth,' that the woman said also that she was impelled by some mysterious agency."

"I do not forget those coincidences; but how your learning would dismiss them as nugatory were your imagination not disposed to exaggerate them. When you read the authentic histories of any popular illusion, such as the spurious inspirations of the Jansenist Convulsionaries, the apparitions that invaded convents, as deposed in the trial of Urbain Grandier, the confessions of witches and wizards in places the most remote from each other, or, at this day, the tales of 'spirit-manifestation' recorded in half the towns and villages of America—do not all the superstitious impressions of a particular time have a common family likeness? What one sees another sees, though there has been no communication between the two. I cannot tell you why these phantasms thus partake of the nature of an atmospheric epidemic; the fact remains incontestable. And strange as may be the coincidence between your impressions of a mystic agency and those of some other brains not cognizant of the chimeras of your own, still, is it not simpler philosophy to say: 'They are coincidences of the same nature which made witches in the same epoch all tell much the same story of the broomsticks they rode and the *sabbats* at which they danced to the fiend's piping,' and there leave the matter, as in science we must leave many of the most elementary and familiar phenomena inexplicable as to their causes—is

not this, I say, more philosophical than to insist upon an explanation which accepts the supernatural rather than leave the extraordinary unaccounted for?"

"As you speak," said I, resting my downcast face upon my hand, "I should speak to any patient who had confided to me the tale I have told to you."

"And yet the explanation does not wholly satisfy you? Very likely: to some phenomena there is, as yet, no explanation. Perhaps Newton himself could not explain quite to his own satisfaction why he was haunted at midnight by the spectrum of a sun; though I have no doubt that some later philosopher, whose ingenuity has been stimulated by Newton's account, has, by this time, suggested a rational solution of that enigma.* To return to your own case. I have offered such interpretations of the mysteries that confound you, as appear to me authorized by physiological science. Should you adduce other facts which physiological science wants the data to resolve into phenomena always natural, however rare, still hold fast to that simple saying of Goethe's: 'Mysteries are not necessarily miracles.' And, if all which physiological science comprehends in its experience wholly fails us, I may then hazard certain conjectures which, by acknowledging ignorance, is compelled to recognize the Marvellous (for as where knowledge enters the Marvellous recedes, so where knowledge falters the Marvellous advances)—yet still, even in those conjectures, I will distinguish the Marvellous from the Supernatural. But, for the present, I advise you to accept the guess that may best quiet

* Newton's explanation is as follows: "This story I tell you to let you understand, that in the observation related by Mr. Boyle, the man's fancy probably concurred with the impression made by the sun's light to produce that phantasm of the sun which he constantly saw in bright objects, and so your question about the cause of this phantasm *involves another about the power of the fancy, which I must confess is too hard a knot for me to untie.* To place this effect in a constant motion is hard, because the sun ought then to appear perpetually. It seems rather to consist in a disposition of the sensorium to move the imagination strongly, and to be easily moved both by the imagination and by the light as often as bright objects are looked upon."—*Letter from Sir I. Newton to Locke*, Lord King's "Life of Locke," vol. i., pp. 405–8.

Dr. Roget ("Animal and Vegetable Physiology considered with reference to Natural Theology," Bridgewater Treatise, pp. 524, 525) thus refers to this phenomenon, which he states "all of us may experience":

"When the impressions are very vivid" (Dr. Roget is speaking of visual impressions), "another phenomenon often takes place, namely, *their subsequent recurrence after a certain interval, during which they are not felt, and quite independently of any renewed application of the cause which had originally excited them.*" (I mark by italics the words which more precisely coincide with Julius Faber's explanations.) "If, for example, we look steadfastly at the sun for a second or two, and then immediately close our eyes, the image or spectrum of the sun remains for a long time present to the mind, as if the light were still acting on the retina. It then gradually fades and disappears; but if we continue to keep the eyes shut, the *same impression will, after a certain time, recur and again vanish:* and this phenomenon will be repeated at intervals, the sensation becoming fainter at each renewal. It then gradually fades and disappears; but if we continue to keep the eyes shut, the same impression will after a time recur, and then vanish, and this phenomenon will be repeated at intervals, the sensation becoming fainter at each

the fevered imagination which any bolder guess would only more excite."

"You are right," said I, rising proudly to the full height of my stature, my head erect and my heart defying. "And so let this subject be renewed no more between us. I will brood over it no more myself. I regain the unclouded realm of my human intelligence; and, in that intelligence, I mock the sorcerer and disdain the spectre."

CHAPTER XLVI.

Julius Faber and Amy Lloyd stayed in my house three days, and in their presence I felt a healthful sense of security and peace. Amy wished to visit her father's house, and I asked Faber, in taking her there, to seize the occasion to see Lilian, that he might communicate to me his impression of a case so peculiar. I prepared Mrs. Ashleigh for this visit by a previous note. When the old man and the child came back, both brought me comfort. Amy was charmed with Lilian, who had received her with the sweetness natural to her real character, and I loved to hear Lilian's praise from those innocent lips.

Faber's report was still more calculated to console me:

"I have seen, I have conversed with her long and familiarly. You were quite right, there is no tendency to consumption in that exquisite, if delicate, organization; nor do I see cause for

renewal. It is probable that these reappearances of the image, after the light which produced the original impression has been withdrawn, are occasioned by spontaneous affections of the retina itself which are conveyed to the sensorium. In other cases, where the impressions are less strong, the physical changes producing these changes are perhaps confined to the sensorium."

It may be said that there is this difference between the spectrum of the sun and such a phantom as that which perplexed Allen Fenwick, viz., that the sun has been actually beheld before its visionary appearance can be reproduced, and that Allen Fenwick only imagines he has seen the apparition which repeats itself to his fancy. "But there are grounds for the suspicion" (says Dr. Hibbert, "Philosophy of Apparitions," p. 250), "*that when ideas of vision are vivified to the height of sensation, a corresponding affection of the optic nerve accompanies the illusion.*" Müller ("Physiology of the Senses," p. 1392, Baley's translation) states the same opinion still more strongly, and Sir David Brewster, quoted by Dr. Hibbert (p. 251), says: "In examining these mental impressions, I have found that they follow the motions of the eyeball exactly like the spectral impressions of luminous objects, and that they resemble them also in their apparent immobility when the eye is displaced by an external force. If this result (which I state with much diffidence, from having only my own experience in its favor) shall be found generally true by others, it will follow that *the objects of mental contemplation may be seen as distinctly as external objects, and will occupy the same local position in the axis of vision, as if they had been formed by the agency of light.*" Hence the impression of an image once conveyed to the senses, no matter how, whether by actual or illusory vision, is liable to renewal, "independently of any renewed application of the cause which had originally excited it," and the image can be seen in that renewal "as distinctly as external objects," for indeed "the revival of the fantastic figure really does affect those points of the retina which had been previously impressed,"

the fear to which your statement had pre-inclined me. That head is too nobly formed for any constitutional cerebral infirmity. In its organization, ideality, wonder, veneration are large, it is true, but they are balanced by other organs, now perhaps almost dormant, but which will come into play as life passes from romance into duty. Something at this moment evidently oppresses her mind. In conversing with her, I observed abstraction, listlessness; but I am so convinced of her truthfulness, that if she has once told you she returned your affection, and pledged to you her faith, I should, in your place, rest perfectly satisfied that whatever be the cloud that now rests on her imagination, and for the time obscures the idea of yourself, it will pass away."

Faber was a believer in the main divisions of phrenology, though he did not accept all the dogmas of Gall and Spurzheim; while, to my mind, the refutation of phrenology in its fundamental propositions had been triumphantly established by the lucid arguments of Sir W. Hamilton.* But when Faber rested on phrenological observations assurances in honor of Lilian, I forgot Sir W. Hamilton, and believed in phrenology. As iron girders and pillars expand and contract with the mere variations of temperature, so will the strongest conviction on which the human intellect rests its judgment, vary with the changes of the human heart; and the building is only safe where these variations are foreseen and allowed for by a wisdom intent on self-knowledge.†

There was much in the affcetion that had sprung up between Julius Faber and Amy Lloyd which touched my heart and softened all its emotions. This man, unblessed, like myself, by conjugal and parental ties, had, in his solitary age, turned for solace to the love of a child, as I, in the pride of manhood, had turned to the love of woman. But his love was without fear, without jealousy, without trouble. My sunshine came to me, in a fitful ray, through clouds that had gathered over my noon; his sunshine covered all his landscape, hallowed, and hallowing, by the calm of declining day.

And Amy was no common child. She had no exuberant imagination; she was haunted by no whispers from Afar; she was a creature fitted for the earth, to accept its duties and to

* The summary of this distinguished lecturer's objections to phrenology is to be found in the Appendix to vol. i. of "Lectures on Metaphysics," p. 404, et seq Edition 1859.

† The change of length in iron girders caused by variations of temperature has not unfrequently brought down the whole edifice into which they were admitted. Good engineers and architects allow for such changes produced by temperature. In the tubular bridge across the Menai Straits, a self-acting record of the daily amount of its contraction and expansion is ingeniously contrived.

gladden its cares. Her tender observation, fine and tranquil, was alive to all the important household trifles by which, at the earliest age, man's allotted soother asserts her privilege to tend and to comfort. It was pleasant to see her moving so noiselessly through the rooms I had devoted to her venerable protector, knowing all his simple wants, and providing for them as if by the mechanism of a heart exquisitely moulded to the loving uses of life. Sometimes when I saw her setting his chair by the window (knowing, as I did, how much he habitually loved to be near the light) and smoothing his papers (in which he was apt to be unmethodical), placing the mark in his book when he ceased to read, divining, almost without his glance, some wish passing through his mind, and then seating herself at his feet, often with her work—which was always destined for him or for one of her absent brothers—now and then, with the one small book that she had carried with her, a selection of Bible stories compiled for children—sometimes when I saw her thus, how I wished that Lilian, too, could have seen her, and have compared her own ideal phantasies with those young developments of the natural heavenly Woman!

But was there nothing in that sight from which I, proud of my arid reason even in its perplexities, might have taken lessons for myself?

On the second evening of Faber's visit I brought to him the draft of deeds for the sale of his property. He had never been a man of business out of his profession; he was impatient to sell his property, and disposed to accept an offer at half its value. I insisted on taking on myself the task of negotiator; perhaps, too, in this office I was egotistically anxious to prove to the great physician that that which he believed to be my "hallucination" had in no way obscured my common-sense in the daily affairs of life. So I concluded, and in a few hours, terms for his property that were only just, but were infinitely more advantageous than had appeared to himself to be possible. But, as I approached him with the papers, he put his finger to his lips. Amy was standing by him with her little book in her hand, and his own Bible lay open on the table. He was reading to her from the Sacred Volume itself, and impressing on her the force and beauty of one of the Parables, the adaptation of which had perplexed her; when he had done, she kissed him, bade him good-night, and went away to rest. Then said Faber thoughtfully, and as if to himself more than me:

"What a lovely bridge between old age and childhood is religion. How intuitively the child begins with prayer and

worship on entering life, and how intuitively on quitting life the old man turns back to prayer and worship, putting himself again side by side with the infant."

I made no answer, but, after a pause, spoke of fines and freeholds, title-deeds and money; and when the business on hand was concluded, asked my learned guest if, before he departed, he would deign to look over the pages of my ambitious Physiological Work. There were parts of it on which I much desired his opinion, touching on subjects in which his special studies made him an authority as high as our land possessed.

He made me bring him the manuscript, and devoted much of that night and the next day to its perusal.

When he gave it me back, which was not till the morning of his departure, he commenced with eulogies on the scope of its design, and the manner of its execution, which flattered my vanity so much that I could not help exclaiming: "Then, at least, there is no trace of 'hallucination' here!"

"Alas, my poor Allen! here, perhaps, hallucination, or self-deception, is more apparent than in all the strange tales you confided to me. For here is the hallucination of the man seated on the shores of Nature, and who would say to its measureless sea: 'So far shalt thou go and no farther'; here is the hallucination of the creature, who, not content with exploring the laws of the Creator, ends with submitting to his interpretation of some three or four laws, in the midst of a code of which all the rest are in language unknown to him—the powers and free-will of the Lawgiver Himself; here is the hallucination by which Nature is left Godless, because Man is left soulless. What would matter all our speculations on a Deity who would cease to exist for us when we are in the grave · Why mete out, like Archytas, the earth and the sea, and number the sands on the shore that divides them, if the end of this wisdom be a handful of dust sprinkled over a skull!

> ' Nec quidquam tibi prodest
> Aerias tentasse domos, *animoque* rotundum
> Percurrisse polum *morituro.*'

Your book is a proof of the soul that you fail to discover. Without a soul, no man would work for a Future that begins for his fame when the breath is gone from his body. Do you remember how you saw that little child praying at the grave of her father? Shall I tell you that in her simple orisons she prayed for the benefactor, who had cared for the orphan; who had reared over dust that tomb which, in a Christian burial-

ground, is a mute but perceptible memorial of Christian hopes; that the child prayed, haughty man, for you? And you sat by, knowing nought of this; sat by, amongst the graves, troubled and tortured with ghastly doubts, vain of a reason that was sceptical of eternity, and yet shaken like a reed by a moment's marvel. Shall I tell the child to pray for you no more? That you disbelieve in a soul? If you do so, what is the efficacy of prayer? Speak—shall I tell her this? Shall the infant pray for you never more?"

I was silent—I was thrilled.

"Has it never occurred to you, who, in denying all innate perceptions as well as ideas, have passed on to deductions from which poor Locke, humble Christian that he was, would have shrunk in dismay; has it never occurred to you as a wonderful fact, that the easiest thing in the world to teach a child is that which seems to metaphysical school-men the abstrusest of all problems? Read all those philosophers wrangling about a First Cause, deciding on what *are* miracles, and then again deciding that such miracles cannot be; and when one has answered another, and left in the crucible of wisdom a *caput mortuum* of ignorance, then turn your eyes, and look at the infant praying to the invisible God at his mother's knees. This idea, so miraculously abstract, of a Power that the infant has never seen, that cannot be symbolled forth and explained to him by the most erudite sage—a Power, nevertheless, that watches over him, that hears him, that sees him, that will carry him across the grave, that will enable him to live on forever—this double mystery of a Divinity and of a Soul the infant learns with the most facile readiness, at the first glimpse of his reasoning faculty. Before you can teach him a rule in addition, before you can venture to drill him into his horn-book, he leaps, with one intuitive spring of all his ideas, to the comprehension of the truths which are only incomprehensible to blundering sages! And you, as you stand before me, *dare* not say: 'Let the child pray for me no more!' But will the Creator accept the child's prayer for the man who refuses prayer for himself? Take my advice—pray! And in this counsel I do not overstep my province. I speak not as a preacher, but as a physician. For health is a word that comprehends our whole organization, and a just equilibrium of all faculties and functions is the condition of health. As in your Lilian, the equilibrium is deranged by the over-indulgence of a spiritual mysticism which withdraws from the nutriment of duty the essential pabulum of sober sense, so in you, the resolute negation of disciplined

spiritual communion between Thought and Divinity robs imagination of its noblest and safest vent. Thus, from opposite extremes, you and your Lilian meet in the same region of mist and cloud, losing sight of each other and of the true ends of life, as her eyes only gaze on the stars and yours only bend to the earth. Were I advising *her*, I should say: 'Your Creator has placed the scene of your trial below, and not in the stars.' Advising *you*, I say: 'But in the trial below, man should recognize education for Heaven.' In a word, I would draw somewhat more downward her fancy, raise somewhat more upward your reason. Take my advice then—Pray. Your mental system needs the support of prayer in order to preserve its balance. In the embarrassment and confusion of your senses, clearness of perception will come with habitual and tranquil confidence in Him who alike rules the universe and reads the heart. I only say here what has been said much better before by a reasoner in whom all students of Nature recognize a guide. I see on your table the very volume of Bacon which contains the passage I commend to your reflection. Here it is. Listen: 'Take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man who, to him, is instead of a God, or *melior natura*, which courage is manifestly such as that creature without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favor, gathereth a force and faith which human nature could not obtain.' * You are silent, but your gesture tells me your doubt—a doubt which your heart, so femininely tender, will not speak aloud lest you should rob the old man of a hope with which your strength of manhood dispenses—you doubt the efficacy of prayer! Pause and reflect, bold but candid inquirer into the laws of that guide you call Nature. If there were no efficacy in prayer; if prayer were as mere an illusion of superstitious phantasy as aught against which your reason now struggles; do you think that Nature herself would have made it amongst the most common and facile of all her dictates? Do you believe that if there really did not exist that tie between Man and his Maker—that link between life here and life hereafter which is found in what we call Soul, alone—that wherever you look through the universe, you would behold a child at prayer? Nature inculcates nothing that is superfluous. Nature does not impel the leviathan or the lion, the eagle

* Bacon's "Essay on Atheism." This quotation is made with admirable felicity and force by Dr. Whewell, page 378 of Bridgewater Treatise on "Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Theology."

or the moth, to pray; she impels only man. Why? Because man only has soul, and Soul seeks to commune with the Everlasting, as a fountain struggles up to its source. Burn your book. It would found you a reputation for learning and intellect and courage, I allow; but learning and intellect and courage wasted against a truth—like spray against a rock! A truth valuable to the world, the world will never part with. You will not injure the truth, but you will mislead and may destroy many, whose best security is in the truth which you so eruditely insinuate to be a fable. Soul and Hereafter are the heritage of all men; the humblest journeyman in those streets, the pettiest trader behind those counters, have in those beliefs their prerogatives of royalty. You would dethrone and embrute the lords of the earth by your theories. For my part, having given the greater part of my life to the study and analysis of facts, I would rather be the author of the tritest homily, or the baldest poem, that inculcated that imperishable essence of the soul to which I have neither scalpel nor probe, than be the founder of the subtlest school, or the framer of the loftiest verse, that robbed my fellow-men of their faith in a spirit that eludes the dissecting-knife, in a being that escapes the grave-digger. Burn your book—Accept This Book instead; Read and Pray."

He placed his Bible in my hand, embraced me, and, an hour afterwards, the old man and the child left my hearth solitary once more.

CHAPTER XLVII.

That night, as I sat in my study, very thoughtful and very mournful, I revolved all that Julius Faber had said; and the impression his words had produced became gradually weaker and weaker, as my reason, naturally combative, rose up with all the replies which my philosophy suggested. No; if my imagination had really seduced and betrayed me into monstrous credulities, it was clear that the best remedy to such morbid tendencies towards the Superstitious was in the severe exercise of the faculties most opposed to Superstition—in the culture of pure reasoning, in the science of absolute fact. Accordingly, I placed before me the very book which Julius Faber had advised me to burn; I forced all my powers of mind to go again over the passages which contained the doctrines that his admonition had censured; and before daybreak, I had stated the substance of his argument, and the logical reply to it, in an

elaborate addition to my chapter on "Sentimental Philosophers." While thus rejecting the purport of his parting counsels, I embodied in another portion of my work his views on my own "illusions," and as here my common-sense was in concord with his, I disposed of all my own previous doubts in an addition to my favorite chapter "On the Cheats of the Imagination." And when the pen dropped from my hand, and the day-star gleamed through the window, my heart escaped from the labor of my mind, and flew back to the image of Lilian. The pride of the philosopher died out of me, the sorrow of the man reigned supreme, and I shrank from the coming of the sun, despondent.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Not till the law had completed its proceedings, and satisfied the public mind as to the murder of Sir Philip Derval, were the remains of the deceased consigned to the family mausoleum. The funeral was, as may be supposed, strictly private, and when it was over, the excitement caused by an event so tragical and singular, subsided. New topics engaged the public talk, and in my presence, at least, the delicate consideration due to one whose name had been so painfully mixed up in the dismal story, forbore a topic which I could not be expected to hear without distressful emotion. Mrs. Ashleigh I saw frequently at my own house; she honestly confessed that Lilian had not shown that grief at the cancelling of our engagement which would alone justify Mrs. Ashleigh in asking me again to see her daughter, and retract my conclusions against our union. She said that Lilian was quiet, not uncheerful, never spoke of me nor of Margrave, but seemed absent and preoccupied as before, taking pleasure in nothing that had been wont to please her; not in music, nor books, nor that tranquil pastime which women call work, and in which they find excuse to meditate, in idleness, their own fancies. She rarely stirred out, even in the garden; when she did, her eyes seemed to avoid the house in which Margrave had lodged, and her steps the old favorite haunt by the Monks' Well. She would remain silent for long hours together, but the silence did not appear melancholy. For the rest, her health was more than usually good. Still, Mrs. Ashleigh persisted in her belief that, sooner or later, Lilian would return to her former self, her former sentiments for me; and she entreated me not, as yet, to let the world know that our engagement was broken off. "For

if," said she, with good sense, "if it should prove not to be broken off, only suspended, and afterwards happily renewed, there will be two stories to tell when no story be needed. Besides, I should dread the effect on Lilian, if offensive gossips babbled to her on a matter that would excite so much curiosity as the rupture of a union in which our neighbors have taken so general an interest."

I had no reason to refuse acquiescence in Mrs. Ashleigh's request, but I did not share in her hopes; I felt that the fair prospects of my life were blasted; I could never love another, never wed another; I resigned myself to a solitary hearth, rejoiced, at least, that Margrave had not revisited at Mrs. Ashleigh's—had not, indeed, reappeared in the town. He was still staying with Strahan, who told me that his guest had ensconced himself in Forman's old study, and amused himself with reading—though not for long at a time—the curious old books and manuscripts found in the library, or climbing trees like a schoolboy, and familiarizing himself with the deer and the cattle, which would group round him quite tame, and feed from his hand. Was this the description of a criminal? But if Sir Philip's assertion were really true; if the criminal were man without soul; if without soul, man would have no conscience, never be troubled by repentance, and the vague dread of a future world—why then, should not the criminal be gay despite his crimes, as the white bear gambols as friskly after his meal on human flesh? These questions would haunt me, despite my determination to accept as the right solution of all marvels the construction put on my narrative by Julius Faber.

Days passed; I saw and heard nothing of Margrave. I began half to hope that, in the desultory and rapid changes of mood and mind which characterized his restless nature, he had forgotten my existence.

One morning I went out early on my rounds, when I met Strahan unexpectedly.

"I was in search of you," he said, "for more than one person has told me that you are looking ill and jaded. So you are! And the town now is hot and unhealthy. You must come to Derval Court for a week or so. You can ride into town every day to see your patients. Don't refuse. Margrave, who is still with me, sends all kind messages and bade me say that *he* entreats you to come to the house at which he also is a guest!"

I started. What had the Scin-Læca required of me, and obtained to that condition my promise? "If you are asked to the house at which I am also a guest, you will come; you will

meet and converse with me as guest speaks to guest in the house of a host!" Was this one of the coincidences which my reason was bound to accept as coincidences, and nothing more? Tut, tut! Was I returning again to my "hallucinations"? Granting that Faber and common-sense were in the right, what was this Margrave? A man to whose friendship, acuteness, and energy I was under the deepest obligations; to whom I was indebted for active services that had saved my life from a serious danger, acquitted my honor of a horrible suspicion. "I thank you," I said to Strahan, "I will come; not, indeed, for a week, but, at all events, for a day or two."

"That's right; I will call for you in the carriage at six o'clock. You will have done your day's work by then?"

"Yes; I will so arrange."

On our way to Derval Court that evening, Strahan talked much about Margrave, of whom, nevertheless, he seemed to be growing weary.

"His high spirits are too much for one," said he "and then so restless, so incapable of sustained quiet conversation. And, clever though he is, he can't help me in the least about the new house I shall build. He has no notion of construction. I don't think he could build a barn."

"I thought you did not like to demolish the old house, and would content yourself with pulling down the more ancient part of it?"

"True. At first it seemed a pity to destroy so handsome a mansion; but you see, since poor Sir Philip's manuscript, on which he set such store, has been too mutilated, I fear, to allow me to effect his wish with regard to it, I think I ought, at least, scrupulously to obey his other whims. And besides, I don't know, there are odd noises about the old house. I don't believe in haunted houses, still there is something dreary in strange sounds at the dead of night, even if made by rats, or winds through decaying rafters. You, I remember at college, had a taste for architecture, and can draw plans. I wish to follow out Sir Philip's design, but on a smaller scale, and with more attention to comfort."

Thus he continued to run on, satisfied to find me a silent and attentive listener. We arrived at the mansion an hour before sunset, the westering light shining full against the many windows cased in mouldering pilasters, and making the general dilapidation of the old place yet more mournfully evident.

It was but a few minutes to the dinner-hour. I went up at once to the room appropriated to me—not the one I had be-

fore occupied. Strahan had already got together a new establishment. I was glad to find in the servant who attended me an old acquaintance. He had been in my own employ when I first settled at L——, and left me to get married. He and his wife were now both in Strahan's service. He spoke warmly of his new master and his contentment with his situation, while he unpacked my carpet-bag and assisted me to change my dress. But the chief object of his talk and his praise was Mr. Margrave.

"Such a bright young gentleman, like the first fine day in May!"

When I entered the drawing-room, Margrave and Strahan were both there. The former was blithe and genial, as usual, in his welcome. At dinner, and during the whole evening till we retired severally to our own rooms, he was the principal talker; recounting incidents of travel, always very loosely strung together, jesting, good-humoredly enough, at Strahan's sudden hobby for building, then putting questions to me about mutual acquaintances, but never waiting for an answer; and every now and then, as if at random, startling us with some brilliant aphorism, or some suggestion drawn from abstract science or unfamiliar erudition. The whole effect was sparkling, but I could well understand that, if long continued, it would become oppressive. The soul has need of pauses of repose—intervals of escape, not only from the flesh, but even from the mind. A man of the loftiest intellect will experience times when mere intellect not only fatigues him, but amidst its most original conceptions, amidst its proudest triumphs, has a something trite and commonplace compared with one of those vague intimations of a spiritual destiny which are not within the ordinary domain of reason; and, gazing abstractedly into space, will leave suspended some problem of severest thought, or uncompleted some golden palace of imperial poetry, to indulge in hazy reveries, that do not differ from those of an innocent, quiet child! The soul has a long road to travel—from time through eternity. It demands its halting hours of con templation. Contemplation is serene. But with such wants of an immortal immaterial spirit, Margrave had no fellowship, no sympathy; and for myself, I need scarcely add that the lines I have just traced I should not have written at the date at which my narrative has now arrived.

CHAPTER XLIX.

I HAD no case that necessitated my return to L—— the following day. The earlier hours of the forenoon I devoted to Strahan and his building plans. Margrave flitted in and out of the room, fitfully as an April sunbeam, sometimes flinging himself on a sofa, and reading for a few minutes one of the volumes of the ancient mystics, in which Sir Philip's library was so rich. I remember it was a volume of Proclus. He read that crabbed and difficult Greek with a fluency that surprised me. "I picked up the ancient Greek," said he, "years ago, in learning the modern." But the book soon tired him; then he would come and disturb us, archly enjoying Strahan's peevishness at interruption; then he would throw open the window and leap down, chanting one of his wild savage airs; and in another moment he was half-hid under the drooping boughs of a broad lime-tree, amidst the antlers of deer that gathered fondly round him. In the afternoon my host was called away to attend some visitors of importance, and I found myself on the sward before the house, right in view of the mausoleum and alone with Margrave.

I turned my eyes from that dumb House of Death wherein rested the corpse of the last lord of the soil, so strangely murdered, with a strong desire to speak out to Margrave the doubts respecting himself that tortured me. But, setting aside the promise to the contrary, which I had given, or dreamed I had given, to the Luminous Shadow, to fulfil that desire would have been impossible—impossible to any one gazing on that radiant youthful face! I think I see him now as I saw him then: a white doe, that even my presence could not scare away from him, clung lovingly to his side, looking up at him with her soft eyes. He stood there like the incarnate principle of mythological sensuous life. I have before applied to him that illustration; let the repetition be pardoned. Impossible, I repeat it, to say to that creature, face to face: "Art thou the master of demoniac arts, and the instigator of secret murder?" As if from redundant happiness within himself, he was humming, or rather cooing, a strain of music, so sweet, so wildly sweet, and so unlike the music one hears from tutored lips in crowded rooms! I passed my hand over my forehead in bewilderment and awe.

"Are there," I said unconsciously—"are there, indeed, such prodigies in Nature?"

"Nature!" he cried, catching up the word; "talk to me of Nature! Talk of her, the wondrous blissful mother! Mother I may well call her. I am her spoiled child, her darling.—But oh, to die, ever to die, ever to lose sight of Nature—to rot, senseless, whether under these turfs or within those dead walls—"

I could not resist the answer.

"Like yon murdered man! murdered, and by whom?"

"By whom? I thought that was clearly proved."

"The hand was proved; what influence moved the hand?"

"Tush! the poor wretch spoke of a Demon. Who can tell? Nature herself is a grand destroyer. See that pretty bird, in its beak a writhing worm! All Nature's children live to take life; none, indeed, so lavishly as man. What hecatombs slaughtered, not to satisfy the irresistible sting of hunger, but for the wanton ostentation of a feast, which he may scarcely taste, or for the mere sport that he finds in destroying. We speak with dread of the beasts of prey: what beast of prey is so dire a ravager as man?—so cruel and so treacherous? Look at yon flock of sheep, bred and fattened for the shambles; and this hind that I caress—if I were the park-keeper, and her time for my bullet had come, would you think her life was the safer because, in my own idle whim, I had tamed her to trust to the hand raised to slay her?"

"It is true," said I—"a grim truth. Nature, on the surface so loving and so gentle, is full of terror in her deeps when our thought descends into their abyss!"

Strahan now joined us with a party of country visitors.

"Margrave is the man to show you the beauties of this park," said he. "Margrave knows every bosk and dingle, twisted old thorn-tree, or opening glade, in its intricate, undulating ground."

Margrave seemed delighted at this proposition; and as he led us through the park, though the way was long, though the sun was fierce, no one seemed fatigued. For the pleasure he felt in pointing out detached beauties which escaped an ordinary eye was contagious. He did not talk as talks the poet or the painter: but at some lovely effect of light amongst the tremulous leaves, some sudden glimpse of a sportive rivulet below, he would halt, point it out to us in silence, and with a kind of childlike ecstasy in his own bright face, that seemed to reflect the life and the bliss of the blithe summer-day itself.

Thus seen, all my doubts in his dark secret nature faded away—all my horror, all my hate; it was impossible to resist the charm that breathed round him, not to feel a tender, affec-

tionate yearning towards him as to some fair happy child. Well might he call himself the darling of Nature. Was he not the mysterious likeness of that awful Mother, beautiful as Apollo in one aspect, direful as Typhon in another?

CHAPTER L.

"WHAT a strange-looking cane you have, sir!" said a little girl, who was one of the party, and who had entwined her arm round Margrave's. "Let me look at it."

"Yes," said Strahan; "that cane, or rather walking-staff, is worth looking at. Margrave bought it in Egypt, and declares that it is very ancient."

This staff seemed constructed from a reed: looked at, it seemed light, in the hand it felt heavy; it was of a pale, faded yellow, wrought with black rings at equal distances, and graven with half-obliterated characters that seemed hieroglyphic. I remembered to have seen Margrave with it before, but I had never noticed it with any attention until now, when it was passed from hand to hand. At the head of the cane there was a large unpolished stone of a dark blue.

"Is this a pebble or a jewel?" asked one of the party.

"I cannot tell you its name or nature," said Margrave; "but it is said to cure the bite of serpents,* and has other supposed virtues—a talisman, in short."

* The following description of a stone at Corfu, celebrated as an antidote to the venom of the serpent's bite, was given to me by an eminent scholar and legal functionary in that island:

"DESCRIPTION OF THE BLUE STONE.—This stone is of an oval shape, one and two-tenths inches long, seven-tenths broad, three-tenths thick, and having been broken formerly, is now set in gold.

"When a person is bitten by a poisonous snake, the bite must be opened by a cut of a lancet or razor longways, and the stone applied within twenty-four hours. The stone then attaches itself firmly on the wound, and when it has done its office falls off; the cure is then complete. The stone must then be thrown into milk, whereupon it vomits the poison it has absorbed, which remains green on the top of the milk, and the stone is then again fit for use.

"This stone has been from time immemorial in the family of Ventura of Corfu, a house of Italian origin, and is notorious, so that peasants immediately apply for its aid. Its virtue has not been impaired by the fracture. Its nature or composition is unknown.

"In a case where two were stung at the same time by serpents, the stone was applied to one, who recovered; but the other, for whom it could not be used, died.

"It never failed but once, and then it was applied *after* the twenty-four hours.

"Its color is so dark as not to be distinguished from black.

"P. M. COLQUHOUN.

"Corfu, 7th Nov., 1860."

Sir Emerson Tennent, in his popular and excellent work on Ceylon, gives an account of "snake stones" apparently similar to the one at Corfu, except that they are "intensely black and highly polished," and which are applied, in much the same manner, to the wounds inflicted by the cobra-capella.

Query.—Might it not be worth while to ascertain the chemical properties of these stones, and, if they be efficacious in the extraction of venom conveyed by a bite, might they not be as successful if applied to the bite of a mad dog as to that of a cobra-capella?

He here placed the staff in my hands, and bade me look at it with care. Then he changed the conversation and renewed the way, leaving the staff with me, till suddenly I forced it back on him. I could not have explained why, but its touch as it warmed in my clasp seemed to send through my whole frame a singular thrill, and a sensation as if I no longer felt my own weight—as if I walked on air.

Our rambles came to a close; the visitors went away; I re-entered the house through the sash-window of Forman's study; Margrave threw his hat and staff on the table, and amused himself with examining minutely the tracery on the mantel-piece. Strahan and myself left him thus occupied and going into the adjoining library resumed our task of examining the plans for the new house. I continued to draw out lines and sketches of various alterations, tending to simplify and contract Sir Philip's general design. Margrave soon joined us and, this time, took his seat patiently beside our table, watching me use ruler and compass with unwonted attention.

"I wish I could draw," he said, "but I can do nothing useful."

"Rich men like you," said Strahan peevishly, "can engage others, and are better employed in rewarding good artists than in making bad drawings themselves."

"Yes, I can employ others; and—Fenwick, when you have finished with Strahan, I will ask permission to employ you, though without reward; the task I would impose will not take you a minute."

He then threw himself back in his chair, and seemed to fall into a doze.

The dressing-bell rang; Strahan put away the plans—indeed, they were now pretty well finished and decided on.

Margrave woke up as our host left the room to dress, and drawing me towards another table in the room, placed before me one of his favorite mystic books, and, pointing to an old woodcut, said:

"I will ask you to copy this for me; it pretends to be a fac-simile of Solomon's famous seal. I have a whimsical desire to have a copy of it. You observe two triangles interlaced and inserted in a circle?—the pentacle, in short. Yes, just so. You need not add the astrological characters; they are the senseless superfluous accessories of the dreamer who wrote the book. But the pentacle itself has an intelligible meaning; it belongs to the only universal language, the language of symbol, in which all races that think—around, and above, and below

us—can establish communion of thought. If in the external universe any one constructive principle can be detected, it is the geometrical; and in every part of the world in which magic pretends to a written character, I find that its hieroglyphics are geometrical figures. Is it not laughable that the most positive of all the sciences should thus lend its angles and circles to the use of—what shall I call it?—the ignorance?—ay, that is the word—the ignorance of dealers in magic?"

He took up the paper, on which I had hastily described the triangles and the circle, and left the room chanting the serpent-charmer's song.

CHAPTER LI.

When we separated for the night, which we did at eleven o'clock, Margrave said:

"Good-night and good-bye. I must leave you to-morrow, Strahan, and before your usual hour for rising. I took the liberty of requesting one of your men to order me a chaise from L——. Pardon my seeming abruptness, but I always avoid long leave-takings, and I had fixed the date of my departure almost as soon as I accepted your invitation."

"I have no right to complain. The place must be dull indeed to a gay young fellow like you. It is dull even to me. I am meditating flight already. Are you going back to L——?"

"Not even for such things as I left at my lodgings. When I settle somewhere and can give an address, I shall direct them to be sent to me. There are, I hear, beautiful patches of scenery towards the north, only known to pedestrian tourists. I am a good walker; and you know, Fenwick, that I am also a child of Nature. Adieu to you both; and many thanks to you, Strahan, for your hospitality."

He left the room.

"I am not sorry he is going," said Strahan, after a pause, and with a quick breath as if of relief. "Do you not feel that he exhausts one? An excess of oxygen, as you would say in a lecture."

I was alone in my own chamber; I felt indisposed for bed and for sleep; the curious conversation I had held with Margrave weighed on me. In that conversation, we had indirectly touched upon the prodigies which I had not brought myself to speak of with frank courage, and certainly nothing in Mar-

grave's manner had betrayed consciousness of my suspicions; on the contrary, the open frankness with which he evinced his predilection for mystic speculation, or uttered his more unamiable sentiments, rather tended to disarm than encourage belief in gloomy secrets or sinister powers. And as he was about to quit the neighborhood, he would not again see Lilian, not even enter the town of L——. Was I to ascribe this relief from his presence to the promise of the Shadow, or was I not rather right in battling firmly against any grotesque illusion, and accepting his departure as a simple proof that my jealous fears had been amongst my other chimeras, and that as he had really only visited Lilian out of friendship to me, in my peril, so he might, with his characteristic acuteness, have guessed my jealousy, and ceased his visits from a kindly motive delicately concealed? And might not the same motive now have dictated the words which were intended to assure me that L—— contained no attractions to tempt him to return to it? Thus, gradually soothed and cheered by the course to which my reflections led me, I continued to muse for hours. At length, looking at my watch, I was surprised to find it was the second hour after midnight. I was just about to rise from my chair to undress, and secure some hours of sleep, when the well-remembered cold wind passed through the room, stirring the roots of my hair; and before me stood, against the wall, the Luminous Shadow.

"Rise and follow me," said the voice, sounding much nearer than it had ever done before.

And at those words I rose mechanically, and like a sleep-walker.

"Take up the light."

I took it.

The Scin-Læca glided along the wall towards the threshold, and motioned me to open the door. I did so. The Shadow flitted on through the corridor. I followed, with hushed footsteps, down a small stair into Forman's study. In all my subsequent proceedings, about to be narrated, the Shadow guided me, sometimes by voice, sometimes by sign. I obeyed the guidance not only unresistingly, but without a desire to resist. I was unconscious either of curiosity or of awe; only of a calm and passive indifference, neither pleasurable nor painful. In this obedience, from which all will seemed extracted, I took into my hands the staff which I had examined the day before, and which lay on the table just where Margrave had cast it on re-entering the house. I unclosed the shutter to the casement,

lifted the sash, and, with the light in my left hand, the staff in my right stepped forth into the garden. The night was still; the flame of the candle scarcely trembled in the air; the Shadow moved on before me towards the old pavilion described in an earlier part of this narrative, and of which the mouldering doors stood wide open. I followed the Shadow into the pavilion, up the crazy stair to the room above, with its four great blank unglazed windows, or rather arcades, north, south, east, and west. I halted on the middle of the floor: right before my eyes, through the vista made by breathless boughs, stood out from the moonlit air the dreary mausoleum. Then, at the command conveyed to me, I placed the candle on a wooden settle, touched a spring in the handle of the staff, a lid flew back, and I drew from the hollow, first a lump of some dark bituminous substance, next a smaller slender wand of polished steel, of which the point was tipped with a translucent material, which appeared to me like crystal. Bending down, still obedient to the direction conveyed to me, I described on the floor with the lump of bitumen (if I may so call it) the figure of the pentacle with the interlaced triangles, in a circle nine feet in diameter, just as I had drawn it for Margrave the evening before. The material used made the figure perceptible, in a dark color of mingled black and red. I applied the flame of the candle to the circle, and immediately it became lambent with a low steady splendor that rose about an inch from the floor, and gradually from this light there emanated a soft gray transparent mist and a faint but exquisite odor. I stood in the midst of the circle, and within the circle also, close by my side, stood the Scin-Læca; no longer reflected on the wall, but apart from it, erect, rounded into more integral and distinct form, yet impalpable, and from it there breathed an icy air. Then lifting the wand, the broader end of which rested in the palm of my hand, the two forefingers closing lightly over it in a line parallel with the point, I directed it towards the wide aperture before me, fronting the mausoleum. I repeated aloud some words whispered to me in a language I knew not: those words I would not trace on this paper, could I remember them. As they came to a close, I heard a howl from the watch-dog in the yard—a dismal, lugubrious howl. Other dogs in the distant village caught up the sound, and bayed in a dirge-like chorus; and the howling went on louder and louder. Again strange words were whispered to me, and I repeated them in mechanical submission; and when they, too, were ended, I felt the ground tremble beneath me, and as my eyes looked straight

forward down the vista, that, stretching from the casement, was bounded by the solitary mausoleum, vague formless shadows seemed to pass across the moonlight—below, along the sward—above, in the air; and then suddenly a terror, not before conceived, came upon me.

And a third time words were whispered; but, though I knew no more of their meaning than I did of those that had preceded them, I felt a repugnance to utter them aloud. Mutely I turned towards the Scin-Læca, and the expression of its face was menacing and terrible; my will became yet more compelled to the control imposed upon it, and my lips commenced the formula again whispered into my ear, when I heard distinctly a voice of warning and of anguish, that murmured "Hold!" I knew the voice; it was Lilian's. I paused—I turned towards the quarter from which the voice had come, and in the space afar I saw the features, the form of Lilian. Her arms were stretched towards me in supplication, her countenance was deadly pale and anxious with unutterable distress. The whole image seemed in unison with the voice; the look, the attitude, the gesture of one who sees another in deadly peril, and cries, "Beware!"

This apparition vanished in a moment; but that moment sufficed to free my mind from the constraint which had before enslaved it. I dashed the wand to the ground, sprang from the circle, rushed from the place. How I got into my own room I can remember not—I know not; I have a vague reminiscence of some intervening wanderings, of giant trees, of shroud-like moonlight, of the Shining Shadow and its angry aspect, of the blind walls and the iron door of the House of the Dead, of spectral images—a confused and dreary phantasmagoria. But all I can recall with distinctness is the sight of my own hueless face in the mirror in my own still room, by the light of the white moon through the window; and sinking down I said to myself: "This, at least, is an hallucination or a dream!"

CHAPTER LII.

A HEAVY sleep came over me at daybreak, but I did not undress nor go to bed. The sun was high in the heavens when, on waking, I saw the servant who had attended me bustling about the room.

"I beg your pardon, sir, I am afraid I disturbed you; but I have been three times to see if you were not coming down, and

I found you so soundly asleep I did not like to wake you. Mr. Strahan has finished breakfast, and gone out riding; Mr. Margrave has left—left before six o'clock."

"Ah, he said he was going early."

"Yes, sir; and he seemed so cross when he went. I could never have supposed so pleasant a gentleman could put himself into such a passion!"

"What was the matter?"

"Why, his walking-stick could not be found; it was not in the hall. He said he had left it in the study; we could not find it there. At last he found it himself in the old summer-house, and said—I beg pardon, he said—'he was sure you had taken it there: that some one, at all events, had been meddling with it.' However, I am very glad it was found, since he seems to set such store on it."

"Did Mr. Margrave go himself into the summer-house to look for it?"

"Yes, sir; no one else would have thought of such a place: no one likes to go there, even in the daytime."

"Why?"

"Why, sir, they say it is haunted since poor Sir Philip's death: and, indeed, there are strange noises in every part of the house. I am afraid you had a bad night, sir," continued the servant, with evident curiosity glancing towards the bed, which I had not pressed, and towards the evening-dress, which, while he spoke, I was rapidly changing for that which I habitually wore in the morning. "I hope you did not feel yourself ill?"

"No! but it seems I fell asleep in my chair."

"Did you hear, sir, how the dogs howled about two o'clock in the morning? They woke me. Very frightful!"

"The moon was at her full. Dogs will bay the moon."

I felt relieved to think that I should not find Strahan in the breakfast-room, and hastening through the ceremony of a meal which I scarcely touched, I went out into the park unobserved, and creeping round the copses and into the neglected gardens, made my way to the pavilion. I mounted the stairs—I looked on the floor of the upper room; yes, there still was the black figure of the pentacle—the circle. So, then, it was not a dream! Till then I had doubted. Or might it not still be so far a dream, that I had walked in my sleep, and with an imagination preoccupied by my conversation with Margrave; by the hieroglyphics on the staff I had handled; by the very figure associated with superstitious practices which I had copied from

some weird book at his request; by all the strange impressions previously stamped on my mind; might I not, in truth, have carried thither in sleep the staff, described the circle, and all the rest been but visionary delusion? Surely—surely, so common-sense and so Julius Faber would interpret the riddles that perplexed me! Be that as it may, my first thought was to efface the marks on the floor. I found this easier than I had ventured to hope. I rubbed the circle and the pentacle away from the boards with the sole of my foot, leaving but an undistinguishable smudge behind. I know not why, but I felt the more nervously anxious to remove all such evidences of my nocturnal visit to that room, because Margrave had so openly gone thither to seek for the staff, and had so rudely named me to the servant as having meddled with it. Might he not awake some suspicion against me? Suspicion, what of? I knew not, but I feared!

The healthful air of day gradually nerved my spirits and relieved my thoughts. But the place had become hateful to me. I resolved not to wait for Strahan's return, but to walk back to L——, and leave a message for my host. It was sufficient excuse that I could not longer absent myself from my patients; accordingly, I gave directions to have the few things which I had brought with me sent to my house by any servant who might be going to L——, and was soon pleased to find myself outside the park gates and on the high-road.

I had not gone a mile before I met Strahan on horseback. He received my apologies for not waiting his return to bid him farewell, without observation, and, dismounting, led his horse and walked beside me on my road. I saw that there was something on his mind; at last he said, looking down:

"Did you hear the dogs howl last night?"

"Yes! the full moon!"

"You were awake, then, at the time. Did you hear any other sound? Did you see anything?"

"What should I hear or see?"

Strahan was silent for some moments; then he said, with great seriousness:

"I could not sleep when I went to bed last night; I felt feverish and restless. Somehow or other, Margrave got into my head, mixed-up in some strange way with Sir Philip Derval. I heard the dogs howl, and at the same time, or rather a few minutes later, I felt the whole house tremble, as a frail corner-house in London seems to tremble at night when a carriage is driven past it. The howling had then ceased, and ceased as suddenly as it had begun. I felt a vague superstitious alarm; I got

up, and went to my window, which was unclosed (it is my habit to sleep with my windows open)—the moon was very bright, and I saw, I declare I saw, along the green alley that leads from the old part of the house to the mausoleum—No, I will not say what I saw or believed I saw—you would ridicule me, and justly. But, whatever it might be, on the earth without or in fancy within my brain, I was so terrified that I rushed back to my bed and buried my face in my pillow. I would have come to you; but I did not dare to stir. I have been riding hard all the morning in order to recover my nerves. But I dread sleeping again under that roof, and now that you and Margrave leave me, I shall go this very day to London. I hope all that I have told you is no bad sign of any coming disease; blood to the head, eh?"

"No; but imagination overstrained can produce wondrous effects. You do right to change the scene. Go to London at once; amuse yourself, and—"

"Not return, till the old house is razed to the ground. That is my resolve. You approve? That's well. All success to you, Fenwick. I will canter back and get my portmanteau ready and the carriage out, in time for the five o'clock train."

So then he, too, had seen—what? I did not dare and I did not desire to ask him. But he, at least, was not walking in his sleep! Did we both dream, or neither?

CHAPTER LIII.

THERE is an instance of the absorbing tyranny of every-day life which must have struck all such of my readers as have ever experienced one of those portents which are so at variance with every-day life, that the ordinary epithet bestowed on them is "supernatural."

And be my readers few or many, there will be no small proportion of them to whom, once at least in the course of their existence, a something strange and *eerie* has occurred—a something which perplexed and baffled rational conjecture, and struck on those chords which vibrate to superstition. It may have been only a dream unaccountably verified, an undefinable presentiment or forewarning; but up from such slighter and vaguer tokens of the realm of marvel, up to the portents of ghostly apparitions or haunted chambers, I believe that the greater number of persons arrived at middle age, however instructed the class, however civilized the land, however sceptical the period,

to which they belong, have either in themselves experienced, or heard recorded by intimate associates whose veracity they accept as indisputable in all ordinary transactions of life, phenomena which are not to be solved by the wit that mocks them, nor, perhaps, always and entirely, to the contentment of the reason or the philosophy that explains them away. Such phenomena, I say, are infinitely more numerous than would appear from the instances currently quoted and dismissed with a jest; for few of those who have witnessed them are disposed to own it, and they who only hear them through others, however trustworthy, would not impugn their character for common-sense by professing a belief to which common-sense is a merciless persecutor. But he who reads my assertion in the quiet of his own room will, perhaps, pause, ransack his memory, and find there, in some dark corner which he excludes from "the babbling and remorseless day," a pale recollection that proves the assertion not untrue.

And it is, I say, an instance of the absorbing tyranny of every-day life, that whenever some such startling incident disturbs its regular tenor, of thought and occupation, that same every-day life hastens to bury in its sands the object which has troubled its surface; the more unaccountable, the more prodigious has been the phenomenon which has scared and astounded us; the more, with involuntary effort, the mind seeks to rid itself of an enigma which might disease the reason that tries to solve it. We go about our mundane business with renewed avidity; we feel the necessity of proving to ourselves that we are still sober, practical men, and refuse to be unfitted for the world which we know, by unsolicited visitations from worlds into which every glimpse is soon lost amid shadows. And it amazes us to think how soon such incidents, though not actually forgotten, though they can be recalled, and recalled too vividly for health, at our will, are nevertheless thrust, as it were, out of the mind's sight as we cast into lumber-rooms the crutches and splints that remind us of a broken limb which has recovered its strength and tone. It is a felicitous peculiarity in our organization, which all members of my profession will have noticed, how soon, when a bodily pain is once past, it becomes erased from the recollection—how soon and how invariably the mind refuses to linger over and recall it. No man freed an hour before from a raging toothache, the rack of a neuralgia, seats himself in his arm-chair to recollect and ponder upon the anguish he has undergone. It is the same with certain afflictions of the mind,—not with those that strike on our

affections, or blast our fortunes, overshadowing our whole future with a sense of loss; but where a trouble or calamity has been an accident, an episode in our wonted life; where it affects ourselves alone; where it is attended with a sense of shame and humiliation; where the pain of recalling it seems idle, and if indulged would almost madden us—agonies of that kind we do not brood over as we do over the death or falsehood of beloved friends, or the train of events by which we are reduced from wealth to penury. No one, for instance, who has escaped from a shipwreck, from the brink of a precipice, from the jaws of a tiger, spends his days and nights in reviving his terrors past, re-imagining dangers not to occur again, or, if they do occur, from which the experience undergone can suggest no additional safeguards. The current of our life, indeed, like that of the rivers, is most rapid in the midmost channel, where all streams are alike comparatively slow in the depth and along the shores in which each life, as each river, has a character peculiar to itself. And hence, those who sail *with* the tide of the world, as those who sail with the tide of a river, hasten to take the middle of the stream, as those who sail *against* the tide are found clinging to the shore. I returned to my habitual duties and avocations with renewed energy; I did not suffer my thoughts to dwell on the dreary wonders that had haunted me, from the evening I first met Sir Philip Derval to the morning on which I had quitted the house of his heir: whether realities or hallucinations, no guess of mine could unravel such marvels, and no prudence of mine guard me against their repetition. But I had no fear that they would be repeated, any more than the man who had gone through shipwreck, or the hairbreadth escape from a fall down a glacier, fears again to be found in a similar peril. Margrave had departed, whither I knew not, and with his departure ceased all sense of his influence. A certain calm within me, a tranquillizing feeling of relief, seemed to me like a pledge of permanent delivery.

But that which did accompany and haunt me, through all my occupations and pursuits, was the melancholy remembrance of the love I had lost in Lilian. I heard from Mrs. Ashleigh, who still frequently visited me, that her daughter seemed much in the same quiet state of mind—perfectly reconciled to our separation—seldom mentioning my name—if mentioning it, with indifference; the only thing remarkable in her state was her aversion to all society, and a kind of lethargy that would come over her, often in the daytime. She would suddenly fall

into sleep and so remain for hours, but a sleep that seemed very serene and tranquil, and from which she woke of herself. She kept much within her own room, and always retired to it when visitors were announced.

Mrs. Ashleigh began reluctantly to relinquish the persuasion she had so long and so obstinately maintained, that this state of feeling towards myself—and, indeed, this general change in Lilian—was but temporary and abnormal; she began to allow that it was best to drop all thoughts of a renewed engagement, a future union. I proposed to see Lilian in her presence and in my professional capacity; perhaps some physical cause, especially for this lethargy, might be detected and removed. Mrs. Ashleigh owned to me that the idea had occurred to herself: she had sounded Lilian upon it; but her daughter had so resolutely opposed it—had said with so quiet a firmness "that all being over between us, a visit from me would be unwelcome and painful," that Mrs. Ashleigh felt that an interview thus deprecated would only confirm estrangement. One day, in calling, she asked my advice whether it would not be better to try the effect of change of air and scene, and, in some other place, some other medical opinion might be taken? I approved of this suggestion with unspeakable sadness.

"And," said Mrs. Ashleigh, shedding tears, "if that experiment prove unsuccessful, I will write and let you know; and we must then consider what to say to the world as a reason why the marriage is broken off. I can render this more easy by staying away. I will not return to L—— till the matter has ceased to be the topic of talk, and at a distance any excuse will be less questioned, and seem more natural. But still—still—let us hope still."

"Have you one ground for hope?"

"Perhaps so; but you will think it very frail and fallacious."

"Name it, and let me judge."

"One night—in which you were on a visit to Derval Court—"

"Ay, that night."

"Lilian woke me by a loud cry (she sleeps in the next room to me, and the door was left open); I hastened to her bedside in alarm; she was asleep, but appeared extremely agitated and convulsed. She kept calling on your name in a tone of passionate fondness, but as if in great terror. She cried: 'Do not go, Allen!—do not go! You know not what you brave!—what you do!' Then she rose in her bed, clasping her hands. Her face was set and rigid: I tried to awake her, but could

not. After a little time, she breathed a deep sigh, and murmured: 'Allen, Allen! dear love! did you not hear?—did you not see me? What could thus baffle matter and traverse space but love and soul? Can you still doubt me, Allen?—doubt that I love you now, shall love you evermore? Yonder, yonder, as here below?' She then sank back on her pillow, weeping, and then I woke her."

"And what did she say on waking?"

"She did not remember what she had dreamed, except that she had passed through some great terror; but added, with a vague smile: 'It is over, and I feel happy now.' Then she turned round and fell asleep again, but quietly as a child, the tears dried, the smile resting."

"Go, my dear friend, go; take Lilian away from this place as soon as you can; divert her mind with fresh scenes. I hope! I do hope! Let me know where you fix yourself. I will seize a holiday—I need one; I will arrange as to my patients; I will come to the same place; she need not know of it, but I must be by to watch, to hear your news of her. Heaven bless you for what you have said! I hope! I do hope!"

CHAPTER LIV.

Some days after, I received a few lines from Mrs. Ashleigh. Her arrangements for departure were made. They were to start the next morning. She had fixed on going into the north of Devonshire, and staying some weeks either at Ilfracombe or Lynton, whichever place Lilian preferred. She would write as soon as they were settled.

I was up at my usual hour the next morning. I resolved to go out towards Mrs. Ashleigh's house, and watch, unnoticed, where I might, perhaps, catch a glimpse of Lilian as the carriage that would convey her to the railway passed my hiding-place.

I was looking impatiently at the clock; it was yet two hours before the train by which Mrs. Ashleigh proposed to leave. A loud ring at my bell! I opened the door. Mrs. Ashleigh rushed in, falling on my breast.

"Lilian! Lilian!"

"Heavens! What has happened?"

"She has left—she is gone—gone away! Oh, Allen! how?—whither? Advise me. What is to be done?"

"Come in—compose yourself—tell me all—clearly, quickly.

Lilian gone?—gone away? Impossible! She must be hid somewhere in the house—the garden; she, perhaps, did not like the journey. She may have crept away to some young friend's house. But *I* talk when you should talk: tell me all."

Little enough to tell! Lilian had seemed unusually cheerful the night before, and pleased at the thought of the excursion. Mother and daughter retired to rest early: Mrs. Ashleigh saw Lilian sleeping quietly before she herself went to bed. She woke betimes in the morning, dressed herself, went into the next room to call Lilian—Lilian was not there. No suspicion of flight occurred to her. Perhaps her daughter might be up already, and gone downstairs, remembering something she might wish to pack and take with her on the journey. Mrs. Ashleigh was confirmed in this idea when she noticed that her own room door was left open. She went downstairs, met a maidservant in the hall, who told her, with alarm and surprise, that both the street and garden doors were found unclosed. No one had seen Lilian. Mrs. Ashleigh now became seriously uneasy. On remounting to her daughter's room, she missed Lilian's bonnet and mantle. The house and garden were both searched in vain. There could be no doubt that Lilian had gone—must have stolen noiselessly at night through her mother's room, and let herself out of the house and through the garden.

"Do you think she could have received any letter, any message, any visitor unknown to you?"

"I cannot think it. Why do you ask? Oh, Allen, you do not believe there is any accomplice in this disappearance! No, you do not believe it. But my child's honor! What will the world think?"

Not for the world cared I at that moment. I could think only of Lilian, and without one suspicion that imputed blame to her.

"Be quiet, be silent; perhaps she has gone on some visit, and will return. Meanwhile, leave inquiry to me."

CHAPTER LV.

It seemed incredible that Lilian could wander far without being observed. I soon ascertained that she had not gone away by the railway, by any public conveyance; had hired no carriage; she must therefore be still in the town, or have left it on foot. The greater part of the day was consumed in un-

successful inquiries, and faint hopes that she would return; meanwhile, the news of her disappearance had spread; how could such news fail to do so?

An acquaintance of mine met me under the archway of Monks' Gate. He wrung my hand, and looked at me with great compassion.

"I fear," said he, "that we were all deceived in that young Margrave. He seemed so well conducted, in spite of his lively manners. But—"

"But what?"

"Mrs. Ashleigh was, perhaps, imprudent to admit him into her house so familiarly. He was certainly very handsome. Young ladies will be romantic."

"How dare you, sir!" I cried, choked with rage. "And without any coloring to so calumnious a suggestion! Margrave has not been in the town for many days. No one knows even where he is."

"Oh, yes, it is known where he is. He wrote to order the effects which he had left here to be sent to Penrith."

"When?"

"The letter arrived the day before yesterday. I happened to be calling at the house where he last lodged, when at L——, the house opposite Mrs. Ashleigh's garden. No doubt the servants in both houses gossip with each other.. Miss Ashleigh could scarcely fail to hear of Mr. Margrave's address from her maid; and since servants will exchange gossip, they may also convey letters. Pardon me, you know I am your friend."

"Not from the moment you breathe a word against my betrothed wife," said I fiercely.

I wrenched myself from the clasp of the man's hand, but his words still rang in my ears. I mounted my horse; I rode into the adjoining suburbs, the neighboring villages; there, however, I learned nothing till, just at nightfall, in a hamlet about ten miles from L——, a laborer declared he had seen a young lady dressed as I described, who passed by him in a path through the fields a little before noon; that he was surprised to see one so young, so well dressed, and a stranger to the neighborhood (for he knew by sight the ladies of the few families scattered around), walking alone; that as he stepped out of the path to make way for her, he looked hard into her face, and she did not heed him—seemed to gaze right before her, into space. If her expression had been less quiet and gentle, he should have thought, he could scarcely say why, that she

was not quite right in her mind—there was a strange unconscious stare in her eyes, as if she were walking in her sleep. Her pace was very steady—neither quick nor slow. He had watched her till she passed out of sight, amidst a wood through which the path wound its way to a village at some distance.

I followed up this clue. I arrived at the village to which my informant directed me, but night had set in. Most of the houses were closed, so I could glean no further information from the cottages or at the inn. But the police superintendent of the district lived in the village, and to him I gave instructions which I had not given, and, indeed, would have been disinclined to give, to the police at L——. He was intelligent and kindly; he promised to communicate at once with the different police-stations for miles round, and with all delicacy and privacy. It was not probable that Lilian could have wandered in one day much farther than the place at which I then was; it was scarcely to be conceived that she could baffle my pursuit and the practised skill of the police. I rested but a few hours, at a small public-house, and was on horseback again at dawn. A little after sunrise I again heard of the wanderer. At a lonely cottage, by a brick-kiln, in the midst of a wide common, she had stopped the previous evening, and asked for a draught of milk. The woman who gave it to her inquired if she had lost her way? She said "No"; and, only tarrying a few minutes, had gone across the common; and the woman supposed she was a visitor at a gentleman's house which was at the farther end of the waste, for the path she took led to no town, no village. It occurred to me then, that Lilian avoided all highroads, all places, even the humblest, where men congregated together. But where could she have passed the night? Not to fatigue the reader with the fruitless result of frequent inquiries, I will but say that at the end of the second day I had succeeded in ascertaining that I was still on her track; and though I had ridden to and fro nearly double the distance—coming back again to places I had left behind—it was at the distance of forty miles from L—— that I last heard of her that second day. She had been seen sitting alone by a little brook only an hour before. I was led to the very spot by a woodman—it was at the hour of twilight when he beheld her—she was leaning her face on her hand, and seemed weary. He spoke to her; she did not answer, but rose, and resumed her way along the banks of the streamlet. That night I put up at no inn; I followed the course of the brook for miles, then struck into every path that I could conceive her to have

taken—in vain. Thus I consumed the night on foot, tying my horse to a tree, for he was tired out, and returning to him at sunrise. At noon, the third day, I again heard of her, and in a remote, savage part of the country. The features of the landscape were changed; there was little foliage and little culture, but the ground was broken into mounds and hollows, and covered with patches of heath and stunted brushwood. She had been seen by a shepherd, and he made the same observation as the first who had guided me on her track—she looked to him "like some one walking in her sleep." An hour or two later, in a dell, amongst the furze-bushes, I chanced on a knot of ribbon. I recognized the color Lilian habitually wore; I felt certain that the ribbon was hers. Calculating the utmost speed I could ascribe to her, she could not be far off, yet still I failed to discover. The scene now was as solitary as a desert; I met no one on my way. At length, a little after sunset, I found myself in view of the sea. A small town nestled below the cliffs, on which I was guiding my weary horse. I entered the town, and while my horse was baiting went in search of the resident policeman. The information I had directed to be sent round the country had reached him; he had acted on it, but without result. I was surprised to hear him address me by name, and looking at him more narrowly, I recognized him for the policeman Waby. This young man had always expressed so grateful a sense of my attendance on his sister, and had, indeed, so notably evinced his gratitude in prosecuting with Margrave the inquiries which terminated in the discovery of Sir Philip Derval's murderer, that I confided to him the name of the wanderer, of which he had not been previously informed; but which it would be, indeed, impossible to conceal from him should the search in which his aid was asked prove successful—as he knew Miss Ashleigh by sight. His face immediately became thoughtful. He paused a minute or two, and then said:

"I think I have it, but I do not like to say; I may pain you, sir."

"Not by confidence; you pain me by concealment."

The man hesitated still; I encouraged him, and then he spoke out frankly.

"Sir, did you never think it strange that Mr. Margrave should move from his handsome rooms in the hotel to a somewhat uncomfortable lodging, from the window of which he could look down on Mrs. Ashleigh's garden? I have seen him at night in the balcony of that window, and when I noticed

him going so frequently into Mrs. Ashleigh's house during your unjust detention, I own, sir, I felt for you—"

"Nonsense! Mr. Margrave went to Mrs. Ashleigh's house as my friend. He has left L—— weeks ago. What has all this to do with—?"

"Patience, sir; hear me out. I was sent from L—— to this station (on promotion, sir) a fortnight since last Friday, for there had been a good deal of crime hereabouts; it is a bad neighborhood, and full of smugglers; some days ago, in watching quietly near a lonely house, of which the owner is a suspicious character down in my books, I saw to my amazement, Mr. Margrave come out of that house—come out of a private door in it, which belongs to a part of the building not inhabited by the owner, but which used formerly, when the house was a sort of inn, to be let to night lodgers of the humblest description. I followed him; he went down to the seashore, walked about, singing to himself; then returned to the house, and re-entered by the same door. I soon learned that he lodged in the house—had lodged there for several days. The next morning, a fine yacht arrived at a tolerably convenient creek about a mile from the house, and there anchored. Sailors came ashore, rambling down to this town. The yacht belonged to Mr. Margrave; he had purchased it by commission in London. It is stored for a long voyage. He had directed it to come to him in this out-of-the-way place, where no gentleman's yacht ever put in before, though the creek, or bay, is handy enough for such craft. Well, sir, is it not strange that a rich young gentleman should come to this unfrequented seashore, put up with accommodation that must be of the rudest kind, in the house of a man known as a desperate smuggler, suspected to be worse—order a yacht to meet him here; is not all this strange? But would it be strange if he were waiting for a young lady? And if a young lady has fled at night from her home, and has come secretly along by-paths, which must have been very fully explained to her beforehand, and is now near that young gentleman's lodging, if not actually in it—if this be so, why the affair is not so very strange after all. And now do you forgive me, sir?"

"Where is this house? Lead me to it."

"You can hardly get to it except on foot; rough walking, sir, and about seven miles off by the shortest cut."

"Come, and at once; come quickly. We must be there before—before—"

"Before the young lady can get to the place. Well, from

what you say of the spot in which she was last seen, I think, on reflection, we may easily do that. I am at your service, sir. But I should warn you that the owners of the house, man and wife, are both of villanous character—would do anything for money. Mr. Margrave, no doubt, has money enough; and if the young lady chooses to go away with Mr. Margrave, you know I have no power to help it."

"Leave all that to me; all I ask of you is to show me the house."

We were soon out of the town; the night had closed in; it was very dark, in spite of a few stars; the path was rugged and precipitous, sometimes skirting the very brink of perilous cliffs; sometimes delving down to the seashore—there stopped by rock or wave—and painfully rewinding up the ascent.

"It is an ugly path, sir, but it saves four miles; and anyhow the road is a bad one."

We came, at last, to a few wretched fishermen's huts. The moon had now risen, and revealed the squalor of poverty-stricken ruinous hovels; a couple of boats moored to the shore; a moaning, fretful sea; and at a distance, a vessel, with lights on board, lying perfectly still at anchor in a sheltered curve of the bold, rude shore. The policeman pointed to the vessel.

"The yacht, sir; the wind will be in her favor if she sails to-night."

We quickened our pace as well as the nature of the path would permit, left the huts behind us, and, about a mile farther on, came to a solitary house, larger than, from the policeman's description, of Margrave's lodgment, I should have presupposed: a house that in the wilder parts of Scotland might be almost a laird's; but even in the moonlight it looked very dilapidated and desolate. Most of the windows were closed, some with panes broken, stuffed with wisps of straw; there were the remains of a wall round the house; it was broken in some parts (only its foundation left). On approaching the house, I observed two doors: one on the side fronting the sea, one on the other side facing a patch of broken ground that might once have been a garden, and lay waste within the enclosure of the ruined wall, encumbered with various litter—heaps of rubbish, a ruined shed, the carcase of a worn-out boat. This latter door stood wide open, the other was closed. The house was still and dark, as if either deserted, or all within it retired to rest.

"I think that open door leads at once to the rooms Mr.

Margrave hires; he can go in and out without disturbing the other inmates. They used to keep, on the side which they inhabit, a beer-house, but the magistrates shut it up; still, it is a resort for bad characters. Now, sir what shall we do?"

"Watch separately. You wait within the enclosure of the wall, hid by those heaps of rubbish, near the door; none can enter but what you will observe them. If you see her, you will accost and stop her, and call aloud for me; I shall be in hearing. I will go back to the high part of the ground yonder—it seems to me that she must pass that way; and I would desire, if possible, to save her from the humiliation, the—the shame of coming within the precincts of that man's abode. I feel I may trust you now and hereafter. It is a great thing for the happiness and honor of this poor young lady and her mother, that I may be able to declare that I did not take her from that man, from any man—from that house, from any house. You comprehend me, and will obey? I speak to you as a confidant and—a friend."

"I thank you with my whole heart, sir, for so doing. You saved my sister's life, and the least I can do is to keep secret all that would pain your life if blabbed abroad. I know what mischief folks' tongues can make. I will wait by the door, never fear, and will rather lose my place than not strain all the legal power I possess to keep the young lady back from sorrow."

This dialogue was interchanged in close, hurried whisper behind the broken wall, and out of all hearing. Waby now crept through a wide gap into the enclosure, and nestled himself silently amidst the wrecks of the broken boat, not six feet from the open door, and close to the wall of the house itself. I went back some thirty yards up the road, to the rising ground which I had pointed out to him. According to the best calculation I could make—considering the pace at which I had cleared the precipitous pathway, and reckoning from the place and time at which Lilian had been last seen—she could not possibly have yet entered that house. I might presume it would be more than half an hour before she could arrive; I was in hopes that, during the interval, Margrave might show himself, perhaps at the door, or from the windows, or I might even by some light from the latter be guided to the room in which to find him. If, after waiting a reasonable time, Lilian should fail to appear, I had formed my plan of action; but it was important for the success of that plan that I should not

lose myself in the strange house, nor bring its owners to Margrave's aid—that I should surprise him alone and unawares. Half an hour, three-quarters, a whole hour thus passed—no sign of my poor wanderer; but signs there were of the enemy, from whom I resolved, at whatever risk, to free and to save her. A window on the ground-floor to the left of the door, which had long fixed my attention because I had seen light through the chinks of the shutters, slowly unclosed, the shutters fell back, the casement opened, and I beheld Margrave distinctly; he held something in his hand that gleamed in the moonlight, directed not towards the mound on which I stood, nor towards the path I had taken, but towards an open space beyond the ruined wall, to the right. Hid by a cluster of stunted shrubs, I watched him with a heart that beat with rage, not with terror. He seemed so intent in his own gaze, as to be unheeding or unconscious of all else. I stole from my post, and, still under cover, sometimes of the broken wall, sometimes of the shaggy ridges that skirted the path, crept on, on till I reached the side of the house itself; then, there secure from his eyes, should he turn them, I stepped over the ruined wall, scarcely two feet high in that place, on—on towards the door. I passed the spot on which the policeman had shrouded himself; he was seated, his back against the ribs of the broken boat. I put my hand to his mouth that he might not cry out in surprise, and whispered in his ear; he stirred not. I shook him by the arm: still he stirred not. A ray of the moon fell on his face. I saw that he was in a profound slumber. Persuaded that it was no natural sleep, and that he had become useless to me, I passed him by. I was at the threshold of the open door; the light from the window close by falling on the ground; I was in the passage; a glimmer came through the chinks of a door to the left; I turned the handle noiselessly, and, the next moment, Margrave was locked in my grasp.

"Call out," I hissed in his ear, "and I strangle you before any one can come to your help!"

He did not call out; his eye, fixed on mine as he writhed round, saw, perhaps, his peril if he did. His countenance betrayed fear, but as I tightened my grasp that expression gave way to one of wrath and fierceness; and as, in turn, I felt the grip of his hand, I knew that the struggle between us would be that of two strong men, each equally bent on the mastery of the other.

I was, as I have said before, endowed with an unusual de-

gree of physical power, disciplined in early youth by athletic exercise and contest. In height and in muscle I had greatly the advantage over my antagonist, but such was the nervous vigor, the elastic energy of his incomparable frame, in which sinews seemed springs of steel, that had our encounter been one in which my strength was less heightened by rage, I believe that I could no more have coped with him than the bison can cope with the boa; but I was animated by that passion which trebles for a time all our forces, which makes even the weak man a match for the strong. I felt that if I were worsted, disabled, stricken down, Lilian might be lost in losing her sole protector; and on the other hand, Margrave had been taken at the disadvantage of that surprise which will half-unnerve the fiercest of the wild beasts; while as we grappled, reeling and rocking to and fro in our struggle, I soon observed that his attention was distracted, that his eye was turned towards an object which he had dropped involuntarily when I first seized him. He sought to drag me towards that object, and when near it stooped to seize. It was a bright, slender, short wand of steel. I remembered when and where I had seen it, whether in my waking state or in vision; and as his hand stole down to take it from the floor, I set on the wand my strong foot. I cannot tell by what rapid process of thought and association I came to the belief that the possession of a little piece of blunted steel would decide the conflict in favor of the possessor, but the struggle now was concentred on the attainment of that seemingly idle weapon. I was becoming breathless and exhausted, while Margrave seemed every moment to gather up new force, when, collecting all my strength for one final effort, I lifted him suddenly high in the air, and hurled him to the farthest end of the cramped arena to which our contest was confined. He fell, and with a force by which most men would have been stunned; but he recovered himself with a quick rebound, and, as he stood facing me, there was something grand as well as terrible in his aspect. His eyes literally flamed, as those of a tiger; his rich hair, flung back from his knitted forehead, seemed to erect itself as an angry mane; his lips, slightly parted, showed the glitter of his set teeth; his whole frame seemed larger in the tension of the muscles, and as, gradually relaxing his first defying and haughty attitude, he crouched as the panther crouches for its deadly spring, I felt as if it were a wild beast whose rush was coming upon me—wild beast, but still Man, the king of the animals, fashioned forth from no mixture of humbler races by

the slow revolutions of time, but his royalty stamped on his form when the earth became fit for his coming.*

At that moment I snatched up the wand, directed it towards him, and advancing with a fearless stride, cried:

"Down to my feet, miserable sorcerer!"

To my own amaze, the effect was instantaneous. My terrible antagonist dropped to the floor as a dog drops at the word of his master. The muscles of his frowning countenance relaxed, the glare of his wrathful eyes grew dull and rayless; his limbs lay prostrate and unnerved, his head rested against the wall, his arms limp and drooping by his side. I approached him slowly and cautiously; he seemed cast into a profound slumber.

"You are at my mercy now!" said I.

He moved his head as in sign of deprecating submission.

"You hear and understand me? Speak!"

His lips faintly muttered: "Yes."

"I command you to answer truly the questions I shall address to you."

"I must while yet sensible of the power that has passed to your hand."

"Is it by some occult magnetic property in this wand that you have exercised so demoniac an influence over a creature so pure as Lilian Ashleigh?"

"By that wand and by other arts which you could not comprehend."

"And for what infamous object? Her seduction, her dishonor?"

"No! I sought in her the aid of a gift which would cease, did she cease to be pure. At first I but cast my influence upon her that through her I might influence yourself. I needed your help to discover a secret. Circumstances steeled your mind against me. I could no longer hope that you would involuntarily lend yourself to my will. Meanwhile, I had found in her the light of a loftier knowledge than that of your science; through that knowledge, duly heeded and cultivated, I hoped to divine what I cannot of myself discover. Therefore I deepened over her mind the spells I command; therefore I have drawn her hither as the loadstone draws the steel, and therefore I would have borne her with me to the shores to which I was about this night to sail. I had cast the inmates of the house and all around it, into slumber, in order that none

* "And yet, even if we entirely omit the consideration of the soul, that immaterial and immortal principle which is for a time united to his body, and view him only in his merely animal character, man is still the most excellent of animals."—Dr. Kidd on the Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man (sect. iii., p. 18).

might witness her departure; had I not done so, I should have summoned others to my aid, in spite of your threat."

"And would Lilian Ashleigh have passively accompanied you, to her own irretrievable disgrace?"

"She could not have helped it; she would have been unconscious of her acts; she was, and is, in a trance; nor, had she gone with me, would she have waked from that state while she lived; that would not have been long."

"Wretch! and for what object of unhallowed curiosity do you exert an influence which withers away the life of its victim?"

"Not curiosity, but the instinct of self-preservation. I count on no life beyond the grave. I would defy the grave, and live on."

"And was it to learn, through some ghastly agencies, the secret of renewing existence, that you lured me by the shadow of your own image on the night when we met last?"

The voice of Margrave here became very faint as he answered me, and his countenance began to exhibit the signs of an exhaustion almost mortal.

"Be quick," he murmured, "or I die. The fluid which emanates from that wand, in the hand of one who envenoms the fluid with his own hatred and rage, will prove fatal to my life. Lower the wand from my forehead; low—low—lower still!"

"What was the nature of that rite in which you constrained me to share?"

"I cannot say. You are killing me. Enough that you were saved from a great danger by the apparition of the protecting image vouchsafed to your eye; otherwise you would—you would—Oh, release me! Away! away!"

The foam gathered to his lips; his limbs became fearfully convulsed.

"One question more: where is Lilian at this moment? Answer that question, and I depart."

He raised his head, made a visible effort to rally his strength, and gasped out:

"Yonder. Pass through the open space up the cliff, beside a thorn-tree—you will find her there, where she halted when the wand dropped from my hand. But—but—beware! Ha! you will serve me yet, and through her! They said so that night, though you heard them not. THEY said it!" Here his face became death-like; he pressed his hand on his heart, and shrieked out "Away—away! or you are my murderer!"

I retreated to the other end of the room, turning the wand from him, and when I gained the door, looked back; his convulsions had ceased, but he seemed locked in a profound swoon. I left the room, the house—paused by Waby; he was still sleeping. "Awake!" I said, and touched him with the wand. He started up at once, rubbed his eyes, began stammering out excuses. I checked them, and bade him follow me. I took the way up the open ground towards which Margrave had pointed the wand, and there, motionless, beside a gnarled fantastic thorn-tree, stood Lilian. Her arms were folded across her breast; her face, seen by the moonlight, looked so innocent and so infantine, that I needed no other evidence to tell me how unconscious she was of the peril to which her steps had been drawn. I took her gently by the hand. "Come with me," I said in a whisper, and she obeyed me silently, and with a placid smile.

Rough though the way, she seemed unconscious of fatigue. I placed her arm in mine, but she did not lean on it. We got back to the town. I obtained there an old chaise and a pair of horses. At morning Lilian was under her mother's roof. About the noon of that day fever seized her; she became rapidly worse, and, to all appearance in imminent danger. Delirium set in; I watched beside her night and day supported by an inward conviction of her recovery, but tortured by the sight of her sufferings. On the third day a change for the better became visible; her sleep was calm, her breathing regular.

Shortly afterwards she woke out of danger. Her eyes fell at once on me with all their old ineffable tender sweetness.

"Oh, Allen, beloved, have I not been very ill? But I am almost well now. Do not weep; I shall live for you—for your sake." And she bent forward, drawing my hand from my streaming eyes, and kissing me with a child's guileless kiss on my burning forehead.

CHAPTER LVI.

LILIAN recovered, but the strange thing was this: all memory of the weeks that had elapsed since her return from visiting her aunt was completely obliterated; she seemed in profound ignorance of the charge on which I had been confined, perfectly ignorant even of the existence of Margrave. She had, indeed, a very vague reminiscence of her conversation with me in the garden—the first conversation which had ever been embittered by a disagreement—but that disagreement

itself she did not recollect. Her belief was that she had been ill and light-headed since that evening. From that evening to the hour of her waking, conscious and revived, all was a blank. Her love for me was restored, as if its thread had never been broken. Some such instances of oblivion after bodily illness or mental shock are familiar enough to the practice of all medical men;* and I was therefore enabled to appease the anxiety and wonder of Mrs. Ashleigh, by quoting various examples of loss, or suspension, of memory. We agreed that it would be necessary to break to Lilian, though very cautiously, the story of Sir Philip Derval's murder, and the charge to which I had been subjected. She could not fail to hear of those events from others. How shall I express her womanly terror, her loving, sympathizing pity, on hearing the tale which I softened as well as I could?

"And to think that I knew nothing of this!" she cried, clasping my hand; "to think that you were in peril, and that I was not by your side!"

Her mother spoke of Margrave as a visitor—an agreeable, lively stranger; Lilian could not even recollect his name, but she seemed shocked to think that any visitor had been admitted while I was in circumstances so awful! Need I say that our engagement was renewed? Renewed! To *her* knowledge and to her heart it had never been interrupted for a moment. But oh! the malignity of the wrong world! Oh! that strange lust of mangling reputations, which seizes on hearts the least wantonly cruel! Let two idle tongues utter a tale against some third person, who never offended the babblers, and how the tale spreads, like fire, lighted none know how, in the herbage of an American prairie! Who shall put it out?

What right have we to pry into the secrets of other men's hearths? True or false, the tale that is gabbled to us, what concern of ours can it be? I speak not of cases to which the law has been summoned, which law has sifted, on which law has pronounced. But how, when the law is silent, can we as-

* Such instances of suspense of memory are recorded in most physiological and in some metaphysical works. Dr. Abercrombie notices some, more or less similar to that related in the text: "A young lady who was present at a catastrophe in Scotland, in which many people lost their lives by the fall of the gallery of a church, escaped without any injury, but with the complete loss of the recollection of any of the circumstances; and this extended not only to the accident, but to everything that had occurred to her for a certain time before going to church. A lady whom I attended some years ago in a protracted illness, in which her memory became much impaired, lost the recollection of a period of about ten or twelve years, but spoke with perfect consistency of things as they stood before that time." Dr. Abercrombie adds: "As far as I have been able to trace it, the principle in such cases seems to be, that when the memory is impaired to a certain degree, the loss of it extends backward to some event or some period by which a particularly deep impression had been made upon the mind."—Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers, pp. 118, 119 (15th edition)

sume its verdicts? How be all judges, where there has been no witness-box, no cross-examination, no jury? Yet, every day we put on our ermine, and make ourselves judges—judges sure to condemn and on what evidence? That which no court of law will receive. Somebody has said something to somebody, which somebody repeats to everybody!

The gossip of L—— had set in full current against Lilian's fair name. No ladies had called or sent to congratulate Mrs. Ashleigh on her return or to inquire after Lilian herself during her struggle between life and death.

How I missed the Queen of the Hill at this critical moment! How I longed for aid to crush the slander, with which I knew not how to grapple—aid in her knowledge of the world, and her ascendency over its judgments! I had heard from her once since her absence, briefly but kindly expressing her amazement at the ineffable stupidity which could for a moment have subjected me to a suspicion of Sir Philip Derval's strange murder, and congratulating me heartily on my complete vindication from so monstrous a charge. To this letter no address was given. I supposed the omission to be accidental, but on calling at her house to inquire her direction, I found that her servants did not know it.

What, then, was my joy when, just at this juncture, I received a note from Mrs. Poyntz, stating that she had returned the night before, and would be glad to see me.

I hastened to her house. "Ah," thought I, as I sprang lightly up the ascent to the Hill, "how the tattlers will be silenced by a word from her imperial lips!" And only just as I approached her door did it strike me how difficult, nay, how impossible to explain to her, the hard, positive woman—her who had, less ostensibly but more ruthlessly than myself, destroyed Dr. Lloyd for his belief in the comparatively rational pretensions of clairvoyance—all the mystical excuses for Lilian's flight from her home? How speak to her—or, indeed, to any one—about an occult fascination and a magic wand? No matter: surely it would be enough to say that, at the time, Lilian had been light-headed, under the influence of the fever which had afterwards nearly proved fatal. The early friend of Anne Ashleigh would not be a severe critic on any tale that might right the good name of Anne Ashleigh's daughter. So assured, with a light heart and cheerful face, I followed the servant into the great lady's pleasant but decorous presence-chamber.

CHAPTER LVII.

Mrs. Poyntz was on her favorite seat by the window, and, for a wonder, not knitting—that classic task seemed done; but she was smoothing and folding the completed work with her white comely hand, and smiling over it, as if in complacent approval, when I entered the room. At the fireside sat the he-colonel, inspecting a newly-invented barometer; at another window, in the farthest recess of the room, stood Miss Jane Poyntz, with a young gentleman whom I had never before seen, but who turned his eyes full upon me with a haughty look as the servant announced my name. He was tall, well proportioned, decidedly handsome, but with that expression of cold and concentred self-esteem in his very attitude, as well as his countenance, which makes a man of merit unpopular, a man without merit ridiculous.

The he-colonel, always punctiliously civil, rose from his seat, shook hands with me cordially, and said: "Coldish weather to-day; but we shall have rain to-morrow. Rainy seasons come in cycles. We are about to commence a cycle of them with heavy showers." He sighed, and returned to his barometer.

Miss Jane bowed to me graciously enough, but was evidently a little confused, a circumstance which might well attract my notice, for I had never before seen that high-bred young lady deviate a hair's breadth from the even tenor of a manner admirable for a cheerful and courteous ease, which, one felt convinced would be unaltered to those around her, if an earthquake swallowed one up an inch before her feet.

The young gentleman continued to eye me loftily, as the heir-apparent to some celestial planet might eye an inferior creature from a half-formed nebula suddenly dropped upon his sublime and perfected star.

Mrs. Poyntz extended to me two fingers, and said, frigidly: "Delighted to see you again! How kind to attend so soon to my note!" Motioning me to a seat beside her, she here turned to her husband, and said: "Poyntz, since a cycle of rain begins to-morrow, better secure your ride to-day. Take these young people with you. I want to talk with Dr. Fenwick."

The colonel carefully put away his barometer, and saying to his daughter "Come!" went forth. Jane followed her father; the young gentleman followed Jane.

The reception I had met chilled and disappointed me. I felt that Mrs. Poyntz was changed, and in her change the whole house seemed changed. The very chairs looked civilly unfriendly, as if preparing to turn their backs on me. However, I was not in the false position of an intruder; I had been summoned; it was for Mrs. Poyntz to speak first, and I waited quietly for her to do so.

She finished the careful folding of her work, and then laid it at rest in the drawer of the table at which she sat. Having so done, she turned to me, and said:

"By the way, I ought to have introduced to you my young guest, Mr. Ashleigh Sumner. You would like him. He has talents—not showy, but solid. He will succeed in public life."

"So that young man is Mr. Ashleigh Sumner? I do not wonder that Miss Ashleigh rejected him."

I said this, for I was nettled, as well as surprised, at the coolness with which a lady who had professed a friendship for me mentioned that fortunate young gentleman, with so complete an oblivion of all the antecedents that had once made his name painful to my ear.

In turn, my answer seemed to nettle Mrs. Poyntz.

"I am not so sure that she did reject; perhaps she rather misunderstood him; gallant compliments are not always proposals of marriage. However that be, his spirits were not much damped by Miss Ashleigh's disdain, nor his heart deeply smitten by her charms; for he is now very happy, very much attached to another young lady, to whom he proposed, three days ago, at Lady Delafield's, and not to make a mystery of what all our little world will know before to-morrow, that young lady is my daughter Jane."

"Were I acquainted with Mr Sumner, I should offer to *him* my sincere congratulations."

Mrs. Poyntz resumed, without heeding a reply more complimentary to Miss Jane than to the object of her choice:

"I told you that I meant Jane to marry a rich country gentleman, and Ashleigh Sumner is the very country gentleman I had then in my thoughts. He is cleverer and more ambitious than I could have hoped: he will be a minister some day, in right of his talents, and a peer, if he wishes it, in right of his lands. So that matter is settled."

There was a pause, during which my mind passed rapidly through links of reminiscence and reasoning, which led me to a mingled sentiment of admiration for Mrs. Poyntz as a diplomatist and of distrust for Mrs. Poyntz as a friend. It was now

clear why Mrs. Poyntz, before so little disposed to approve my love, had urged me at once to offer my hand to Lilian, in order that she might depart affianced and engaged to the house in which she would meet Mr. Ashleigh Sumner. Hence Mrs. Poyntz's anxiety to obtain all the information I could afford her of the sayings and doings at Lady Haughton's; hence the publicity she had so suddenly given to my engagement; hence, when Mr. Sumner had gone away a rejected suitor, her own departure from L——; she had seized the very moment when a vain and proud man, piqued by the mortification received from one lady, falls the easier prey to the arts which allure his suit to another. All was so far clear to me. And I—was my self-conceit less egregious and less readily duped than that of yon gilded popinjay's! How skilfully this woman had knitted me into her work with the noiseless turn of her white hands! And yet, forsooth, I must vaunt the superior scope of my intellect, and plumb all the fountains of Nature—I, who could not fathom the little pool of this female schemer's mind!

But that was no time for resentment to her or rebuke to myself. She was now the woman who could best protect and save from slander my innocent, beloved Lilian. But how approach that perplexing subject?

Mrs. Poyntz approached it, and with her usual decision of purpose, which bore so deceitful a likeness to candor of mind.

"But it was not to talk of my affairs that I asked you to call, Allen Fenwick." As she uttered my name, her voice softened, and her manner took that maternal, caressing tenderness which had sometimes amused and sometimes misled me. "No, I do not forget that you asked me to be your friend, and I take, without scruple, the license of friendship. What are these stories that I have heard already about Lilian Ashleigh, to whom you were once engaged."

"To whom I am still engaged."

"Is it possible? Oh, then, of course the stories I have heard are all false. Very likely; no fiction in scandal ever surprises me. Poor dear Lilian, then, never ran away from her mother's house?"

I smothered the angry pain which this mode of questioning caused me; I knew how important it was to Lilian to secure to her the countenance and support of this absolute autocrat; I spoke of Lilian's long previous distemper of mind; I accounted for it as any intelligent physician, unacquainted with all that I could not reveal, would account. Heaven forgive me for the venial falsehood, but I spoke of the terrible charge

against myself as enough to unhinge, for a time, the intellect of a girl so acutely sensitive as Lilian; I sought to create that impression as to the origin of all that might otherwise seem strange; and in this state of cerebral excitement she had wandered from home—but alone. I had tracked every step of her way; I had found and restored her to her home. A critical delirium had followed, from which she now rose, cured in health, unsuspicious that there could be a whisper against her name. And then, with all the eloquence I could command, and in words as adapted as I could frame them to soften the heart of a woman, herself a mother, I implored Mrs. Poyntz's aid to silence all the cruelties of calumny, and extend her shield over the child of her own early friend.

When I came to an end, I had taken, with caressing force, Mrs. Poyntz's reluctant hands in mine. There were tears in my voice, tears in my eyes. And the sound of her voice in reply gave me hope, for it was unusually gentle. She was evidently moved. The hope was soon quelled.

"Allen Fenwick," she said "you have a noble heart; I grieve to see how it abuses your reason. I cannot aid Lilian Ashleigh in the way you ask. Do not start back so indignantly. Listen to me as patiently as I have listened to you. That when you brought back the unfortunate young woman to her poor mother, her mind was disordered, and became yet more dangerously so, I can well believe; that she is now recovered and thinks with shame, or refuses to think at all, of her imprudent flight, I can believe also; but I do not believe, the World cannot believe, that she did not, knowingly and purposely, quit her mother's roof, and in quest of that young stranger so incautiously, so unfeelingly admitted to her mother's house during the very time you were detained on the most awful of human accusations. Every one in the town knows that Mr. Margrave visited daily at Mrs. Ashleigh's during that painful period; every one in the town knows in what strange out-of-the-way place this young man had niched himself; and that a yacht was bought, and lying in wait there. What for? It is said that the chaise in which you brought Miss Ashleigh back to her home was hired in a village within an easy reach of Mr. Margrave's lodging—of Mr. Margrave's yacht. I rejoice that you saved the poor girl from ruin; but her good name is tarnished, and if Anne Ashleigh, whom I sincerely pity, asks me my advice, I can but give her this: 'Leave L——, take your daughter abroad; and if she is not to marry Mr. Margrave, marry her as quietly and as quickly as possible to some foreigner.' "

"Madam! madam! this, then, is your friendship to her—to me! Oh, shame on you to insult thus an affianced husband! Shame on me ever to have thought you had a heart!"

"A heart, man!" she exclaimed, almost fiercely, springing up, and startling me with the change in her countenance and voice. "And little you would have valued, and pitilessly have crushed this heart, if I had suffered myself to show it to you! What right have you to reproach me? I felt a warm interest in your career, an unusual attraction in your conversation and society. Do you blame me for that, or should I blame myself? Condemned to live amongst brainless puppets, my dull occupation to pull the strings that moved them, it was a new charm to my life to establish friendship and intercourse with intellect, and spirit, and courage. Ah! I understand that look, half-incredulous, half-inquisitive."

"Inquisitive, no! Incredulous, yes! You desired my friendship, and how does your harsh judgment of my betrothed wife prove either to me or to her mother, whom you have known from your girlhood, the first duty of a friend, which is surely not that of leaving a friend's side the moment that he needs countenance in calumny, succor in trouble!"

"It is a better duty to prevent the calumny and avert the trouble. Leave aside Anne Ashleigh, a cipher that I can add or abstract from my sum of life as I please. What is my duty to yourself? It is plain. It is to tell you that your honor commands you to abandon all thoughts of Lilian Ashleigh as your wife. Ungrateful that you are! Do you suppose it was no mortification to my pride of woman and friend, that you never approached me in confidence except to ask my good offices in promoting your courtship to another? No shock to the quiet plans I had formed as to our familiar though harmless intimacy, to hear that you were bent on a marriage in which my friend would be lost to me?"

"Not lost!—not lost! On the contrary, the regard I must suppose you had for Lilian would have been a new link between our homes."

"Pooh! Between me and that dreamy girl there could have been no sympathy, there could have grown up no regard. You would have been chained to your fireside, and—and—but no matter. I stifled my disappointment as soon as I felt it—stifled it, as all my life I have stifled that which either destiny or duty—duty to myself as to others—forbids me to indulge. Ah! do not fancy me one of the weak criminals who can suffer a

worthy liking to grow into a debasing love! I was not in love with you, Allen Fenwick."

"Do you think I was ever so presumptuous a coxcomb as to fancy it?"

"No," she said, more softly; "I was not so false to my household ties and to my own nature. But there are some friendships which are as jealous as love. I could have cheerfully aided you in any choice which my sense could have approved for you as wise; I should have been pleased to have found in such a wife my most intimate companion. But that silly child!—absurd! Nevertheless, the freshness and enthusiasm of your love touched me; you asked my aid, and I gave it; perhaps I did believe that when you saw more of Lilian Ashleigh you would be cured of a fancy conceived by the eye; I should have known better what dupes the wisest men can be to the witcheries of a fair face and eighteen! When I found your illusion obstinate I wrenched myself away from a vain regret, turned to my own schemes and my own ambition, and smiled bitterly to think that, in pressing you to propose so hastily to Lilian, I made your blind passion an agent in my own plans. Enough of this. I speak thus openly and boldly to you now, because now I have not a sentiment that can interfere with the dispassionate soundness of my counsels. I repeat, you cannot now marry Lilian Ashleigh; I cannot take my daughter to visit her; I cannot destroy the social laws that I myself have set in my petty kingdom."

"Be it as you will. I have pleaded for her while she is still Lilian Ashleigh. I plead for no one to whom I have once given my name. Before the woman whom I have taken from the altar, I can place, as a shield sufficient, my strong breast of man. Who has so deep an interest in Lilian's purity as I have? Who is so fitted to know the exact truth of every whisper against her? Yet when I, whom you admit to have some reputation for shrewd intelligence, I, who tracked her way—I, who restored her to her home—when I, Allen Fenwick, am so assured of her inviolable innocence in thought as in deed, that I trust my honor to her keeping, surely, surely, I confute the scandal which you yourself do not believe, though you refuse to reject and to annul it?"

"Do not deceive yourself, Allen Fenwick," said she, still standing beside me, her countenance now hard and stern. "Look, where I stand, I am the WORLD! The World, not as satirists depreciate or as optimists extol its immutable properties, its all-persuasive authority. I am the World! And my

voice is the World's voice when it thus warns you. Should you make this marriage, your dignity of character and position would be gone! If you look only to lucre and professional success, possibly *they* may not ultimately suffer. You have skill, which men need; their need may still draw patients to your door and pour guineas into your purse. But you have the pride, as well as the birth, of a gentleman, and the wounds to that pride will be hourly chafed and never healed. Your strong breast of man has no shelter to the frail name of woman. The World, in its health, will look down on your wife, though its sick may look up to you. This is not all. The World, in its gentlest mood of indulgence, will say, compassionately, 'Poor man! how weak, and how deceived! What an unfortunate marriage!' But the World is not often indulgent; it looks most to the motives most seen on the surface. And the World will more frequently say: 'No, much too clever a man to be duped! Miss Ashleigh had money. A good match to the man who liked gold better than honor.' "

I sprang to my feet, with difficulty suppressing my rage; and, remembering it was a woman who spoke to me. "Farewell, madam," said I, through my grinded teeth. "Were you, indeed, the Personation of The World, whose mean notions you mouth so calmly, I could not disdain you more." I turned to the door, and left her still standing erect and menacing, the hard sneer on her resolute lip, the red glitter in her remorseless eye.

CHAPTER LVIII.

If ever my heart vowed itself to Lilian, the vow was now the most trustful and the most sacred. I had relinquished our engagement before, but then her affection seemed, no matter from what cause, so estranged from me, that though I might be miserable to lose her, I deemed that she would be unhappy in our union. Then, to, she was the gem and darling of the little world in which she lived; no whisper assailed her: now, I knew that she loved me; I knew that her estrangement had been involuntary; I knew that appearances wronged her, and that they never could be explained. I was in the true position of man to woman: I was the shield, the bulwark, the fearless, confiding protector! Resign her now because the world babbled, because my career might be impeded, because my good name might be impeached—resign her, and, in that resig-

nation, confirm all that was said against her! Could I do so, I should be the most craven of gentlemen, the meanest of men!

I went to Mrs. Ashleigh, and entreated her to hasten my union with her daughter, and fix the marriage-day.

I found the poor lady dejected and distressed. She was now sufficiently relieved from the absorbing anxiety for Lilian to be aware of the change on the face of that World which the woman I had just quitted personified and concentred; she had learned the cause from the bloodless lips of Miss Brabazon.

"My child—my poor child!" murmured the mother. "And she so guileless—so sensitive! Could she know what is said, it would kill her. She would never marry you, Allen; she would never bring shame to you!"

"She never need learn the barbarous calumny. Give her to me, and at once; patients, fortune, fame, are not found only at L——. Give her to me at once. But let me name a condition: I have a patrimonial independence; I have amassed large savings; I have my profession and my repute. I cannot touch her fortune—I cannot—never can! Take it while you live; when you die, leave it to accumulate for her children, if children she have; not to me; not to her—unless I am dead or ruined!"

"Oh, Allen, what a heart! What a heart! No, not heart, Allen—that bird in its cage has a heart: *soul*—what a soul!"

CHAPTER LIX.

How innocent was Lilian's virgin blush when I knelt to her, and prayed that she would forestall the date that had been fixed for our union, and be my bride before the breath of the autumn had withered the pomp of the woodland and silenced the song of the birds! Meanwhile, I was so fearfully anxious that she should risk no danger of hearing, even of surmising, the cruel slander against her; should meet no cold, contemptuous looks; above all, should be safe from the barbed talk of Mrs. Poyntz, that I insisted on the necessity of immediate change of air and scene. I proposed that we should all three depart, the next day, for the banks of my own beloved and native Windermere. By that pure mountain air, Lilian's health would be soon re-established: in the church hallowed to me by the graves of my fathers our vows could be plighted. No calumny had ever cast a shadow over those graves. I felt

as if my bride would be safer in the neighborhood of my mother's tomb.

I carried my point: it was so arranged. Mrs. Ashleigh, however, was reluctant to leave before she had seen her dear friend, Margaret Poyntz. I had not the courage to tell her what she might expect to hear from that dear friend, but, as delicately as I could, I informed her that I had already seen the Queen of the Hill, and contradicted the gossip that had reached her; but that as yet, like other absolute sovereigns, the Queen of the Hill thought it politic to go with the popular stream, reserving all check on its direction till the rush of its torrent might slacken; and that it would be infinitely wiser in Mrs. Ashleigh to postpone conversation with Mrs. Poyntz until Lilian's return to L—— as my wife. Slander by that time would have wearied itself out, and Mrs. Poyntz (assuming her friendship to Mrs. Ashleigh to be sincere) would then be enabled to say with authority to her subjects: "Dr. Fenwick alone knows the facts of the story, and his marriage with Miss Ashleigh refutes all the gossip to her prejudice."

I made that evening arrangements with a young and rising practitioner to secure attendance on my patients during my absence. I passed the greater part of the night in drawing up memoranda to guide my proxy in each case, however humble the sufferer. This task finished, I chanced, in searching for a small microscope, the wonders of which I thought might interest and amuse Lilian, to open a drawer in which I kept the manuscript of my cherished Physiological Work, and, in so doing, my eye fell upon the wand which I had taken from Margrave. I had thrown it into that drawer on my return home, after restoring Lilian to her mother's house, and, in the anxiety which had subsequently preyed upon my mind, had almost forgotten the strange possession I had as strangely acquired. There it now lay, the instrument of agencies over the mechanism of nature which no doctrine admitted by my philosophy could accept, side by side with the presumptuous work which had analyzed the springs by which nature is moved, and decided the principles by which reason metes out, from the inch of its knowledge, the plan of the Infinite Unknown.

I took up the wand and examined it curiously. It was evidently the work of an age far remote from our own, scored over with half-obliterated characters in some Eastern tongue, perhaps no longer extant. I found that it was hollow within. A more accurate observation showed, in the centre of this hollow, an exceedingly fine thread-like wire, the unattached end

of which would slightly touch the palm when the wand was taken into the hand. Was it possible that there might be a natural and even a simple cause for the effects which this instrument produced? Could it serve to collect, from that great focus of animal heat and nervous energy which is placed in the palm of the human hand, some such latent fluid as that which Reichenbach calls the "odic," and which, according to him, "rushes through and pervades universal Nature"? After all, why not? For how many centuries lay unknown all the virtues of the loadstone and the amber? It is but as yesterday that the forces of vapor have become to men genii more powerful than those conjured up by Aladdin; that light, at a touch, springs forth from invisible air; that thought finds a messenger swifter than the wings of the fabled Afrite. As thus musing, my hand closed over the wand, I felt a wild thrill through my frame; I recoiled; I was alarmed lest (according to the plain common-sense theory of Julius Faber) I might be preparing my imagination to form and to credit its own illusions. Hastily I laid down the wand. But then it occurred to me, that whatever its properties, it had so served the purposes of the dread Fascinator from whom it had been taken, that he might probably seek to repossess himself of it; he might contrive to enter my house in my absence; more prudent to guard in my own watchful keeping the incomprehensible instrument of incomprehensible arts. I resolved, therefore, to take the wand with me, and placed it in my travelling-trunk, with such effects as I selected for use in the excursion that was to commence with the morrow. I now lay down to rest, but I could not sleep. The recollections of the painful interview with Mrs. Poyntz became vivid and haunting. It was clear that the sentiment she had conceived for me was that of no simple friendship—something more or something less—but certainly something else; and this conviction brought before me that proud, hard face, disturbed by a pang wrestled against but not subdued, and that clear metallic voice, troubled by the quiver of an emotion which, perhaps, she had never analyzed to herself. I did not need her own assurance to know that this sentiment was not to be confounded with a love which she would have despised as a weakness and repelled as a crime; it was an inclination of the intellect, not a passion of the heart. But still it admitted a jealousy little less keen than that which has love for its cause, so true it is that jealousy is never absent where self-love is always present. Certainly, it was no susceptibility of sober friendship which had made the stern arbitress of a

coterie ascribe to her interest in me her pitiless judgment of Lilian. Strangely enough, with the image of this archetype of conventional usages and the trite social life, came that of the mysterious Margrave, surrounded by all the attributes with which superstition clothes the being of the shadowy borderland that lies beyond the chart of our visual world itself. By what link were creatures so dissimilar riveted together in the metaphysical chain of association? Both had entered into the record of my life when my life admitted its own first romance of love. Through the aid of this cynical schemer I had been made known to Lilian. At her house I had heard the dark story of that Louis Grayle, with whom, in mocking spite of my reason, conjectures, which that very reason must depose itself before it could resolve into distempered fancies, identified the enigmatical Margrave. Now both she, the representative of the formal world most opposed to visionary creeds, and he, who gathered round him all the terrors which haunt the realm of fable, stood united against me—foes with whom the intellect I had so haughtily cultured knew not how to cope. Whatever assault I might expect from either, I was unable to assail again. Alike, then, in this, are the Slander and the Phantom; that which appals us most in their power over us is our impotence against them.

But up rose the sun, chasing the shadows from the earth, and brightening insensibly the thoughts of man. After all, Margrave had been baffled and defeated, whatever the arts he had practised and the secrets he possessed. It was, at least, doubtful whether his evil machinations could be renewed. He had seemed so incapable of long-sustained fixity of purpose, that it was probable he was already in pursuit of some new agent or victim; and as to this commonplace and conventional spectre, the so-called World, if it is everywhere to him whom it awes, it is nowhere to him who despises it. What was the good or bad word of a Mrs. Poyntz to me? Ay, but to Lilian? There, indeed, I trembled; but still, even in trembling, it was sweet to think that my home would be her shelter, my choice her vindication. Ah! how unutterably tender and reverential Love becomes when it assumes the duties of the guardian, and hallows its own heart into a sanctuary of refuge for the beloved!

CHAPTER LX.

THE beautiful lake! We two are on its grassy margin—twilight melting into night; the stars stealing forth, one after one.

What a wonderful change is made within us when we come from our callings amongst men, chafed, wearied, wounded; gnawed by our cares, perplexed by the doubts of our very wisdom, stung by the adder that dwells in cities—Slander; nay, even if renowned, fatigued with the burden of the very names that we have won! What a change is made within us when suddenly we find ourselves transported into the calm solitudes of Nature; into scenes familiar to our happy, dreaming childhood; back, back from the dusty thoroughfares of our toil-worn manhood to the golden fountain of our youth! Blessed is the change, even when we have no companion beside us to whom the heart can whisper its sense of relief and joy. But if the one, in whom all our future is garnered up be with us there, instead of that weary World which has so magically vanished away from the eye and the thought, then does the change make one of those rare epochs of life in which the charm is the stillness. In the pause from all by which our own turbulent struggles for happiness trouble existence, we feel with a rapt amazement how calm a thing it is to be happy. And so as the night, in deepening, brightened, Lilian and I wandered by the starry lake. Conscious of no evil in ourselves, how secure we felt from evil! A few days more—a few days more, and we two should be as one! And that thought we uttered in many forms of words, brooding over it in the long intervals of enamoured silence.

And when we turned back to the quiet inn at which we had taken up our abode, and her mother, with her soft face, advanced to meet us, I said to Lilian:

"Would that in these scenes we could fix our home for life, away and afar from the dull town we have left behind us, with the fret of its wearying cares and the jar of its idle babble!"

"And why not, Allen? Why not? But no, you would not be happy."

"Not be happy, and with you? Sceptic, by what reasonings do you arrive at that ungracious conclusion?"

"The heart loves repose and the soul contemplation, but the mind needs action. Is it not so?"

"Where learned you that aphorism, out of place on such rosy lips?"

"I learned it in studying you," murmured Lilian tenderly.

Here Mrs. Ashleigh joined us. For the first time I slept under the same roof as Lilian. And I forgot that the universe contained an enigma to solve or an enemy to fear.

CHAPTER LXI.

TWENTY days—the happiest my life had ever known—thus glided on. Apart from the charm which love bestows on the beloved, there was that in Lilian's conversation which made her a delightful companion. Whether it was that, in this pause from the toils of my career, my mind could more pliantly supple itself to her graceful imagination, or that her imagination was less vague and dreamy amidst those rural scenes, which realized in their loveliness and grandeur its long-conceived ideals, than it had been in the petty garden-ground neighbored by the stir and hubbub of the busy town—in much that I had once slighted or contemned as the vagaries of undisciplined fancy, I now recognized the sparkle and play of an intuitive genius, lighting up many a depth obscure to instructed thought. It is with some characters as with the subtler and more ethereal order of poets. To appreciate them we must suspend the course of artificial life. In the city we call them dreamers, on the mountain-top we find them interpreters.

In Lilian, the sympathy with Nature was not, as in Margrave, from the joyous sense of Nature's lavish vitality; it was refined into exquisite perception of the diviner spirit by which that vitality is informed. Thus, like the artist, from outward forms of beauty she drew forth the covert types, lending to things the most familiar exquisite meanings unconceived before. For it is truly said by a wise critic of old, that "the attribute of Art is to suggest infinitely more than it expresses"; and such suggestions, passing from the artist's innermost thought into the mind that receives them, open on and on into the Infinite of Ideas, as a moonlit wave struck by a passing oar impels wave upon wave along one track of light.

So the days glided by, and brought the eve of our bridal morn. It had been settled that, after the ceremony (which was to be performed by license in the village church, at no great distance, which adjoined my paternal home, now passed away to strangers), we should make a short excursion into Scotland, leaving Mrs. Ashleigh to await our return at the little inn.

I had retired to my own room to answer some letters from anxious patients, and having finished these, I looked into my trunk for a Guide-Book to the North, which I had brought with me. My hand came upon Margrave's wand, and, remembering that strange thrill which had passed through me when I

last handled it, I drew it forth, resolved to examine calmly if I could detect the cause of the sensation. It was not now the time of night in which the imagination is most liable to credulous impressions, nor was I now in the anxious and jaded state of mind in which such impressions may be the more readily conceived. The sun was slowly setting over the delicious landscape; the air cool and serene; my thoughts collected—heart and conscience alike at peace. I took, then, the wand, and adjusted it to the palm of the hand as I had done before. I felt the slight touch of the delicate wire within, and again the thrill! I did not this time recoil; I continued to grasp the wand, and sought deliberately to analyze my own sensations in the contact. There came over me an increased consciousness of vital power; a certain exhilaration, elasticity, vigor, such as a strong cordial may produce on a fainting man. All the forces of my frame seemed refreshed, redoubled; and as such effects on the physical system are ordinarily accompanied by correspondent effects on the mind, so I was sensible of a proud elation of spirits, a kind of defying, superb self-glorying. All fear seemed blotted out from my thought, as a weakness impossible to the grandeur and might which belong to Intellectual Man; I felt as if it were a royal delight to scorn Earth and its opinions, brave Hades and its spectres. Rapidly this newborn arrogance enlarged itself into desires vague but daring. My mind reverting to the wild phenomena associated with its memories of Margrave, I said, half-aloud: "If a creature so beneath myself in constancy of will and completion of thought can wrest from Nature favors so marvellous, what could not be won from her by me, her patient, persevering seeker? What if there be spirits around and about, invisible to the common eye, but whom we can submit to our control; and what if this rod be charged with some occult fluid, that runs through all creation, and can be so disciplined as to establish communication wherever life and thought can reach to beings that live and think? So would the mystics of old explain what perplexes me. Am I sure that the mystics of old duped themselves or their pupils? This, then,—this slight wand, light as a reed in my grasp—this, then, was the instrument by which Margrave sent his irresistible will through air and space, and by which I smote himself, in the midst of his tiger-like wrath, into the helplessness of a sick man's swoon? Can the instrument at this distance still control him; if now meditating evil, disarm and disable his purpose?" Involuntarily, as I revolved these ideas, I stretched forth the wand, with a concentred

energy of desire that its influence should reach Margrave and command him. And since I knew not his whereabout, yet was vaguely aware that, according to any conceivable theory by which the wand could be supposed to carry its imagined virtues to definite goals in distant space, it should be pointed in the direction of the object it was intended to affect, so I slowly moved the wand as if describing a circle, and thus, in some point of the circle—east, west, north, or south—the direction could not fail to be true. Before I had performed half the circle, the wand of itself stopped, resisting palpably the movement of my hand to impel it onward Had it, then, found the point to which my will was guiding it, obeying my will by some magnetic sympathy never yet comprehended by any recognized science? I know not; but I had not held it thus fixed for many seconds, before a cold air, well remembered, passed by me, stirring the roots of my hair; and, reflected against the opposite wall, stood the hateful Scin-Læca. The Shadow was dimmer in its light than when before beheld, and the outline of the features was less distinct—still it was the unmistakable *lemur*, or image, of Margrave.

And a voice was conveyed to my senses, saying, as from a great distance, and in weary yet angry accents:

"You have summoned me? Wherefore?"

I overcame the startled shudder with which, at first, I beheld the Shadow and heard the Voice.

"I summoned you not," said I; "I sought but to impose upon you my will, that you should persecute, with your ghastly influences, me and mine no more. And now, by whatever authority this wand bestows on me, I so adjure and command you!"

I thought there was a sneer of disdain on the lip through which the answer seemed to come:

"Vain and ignorant; it is but a shadow you command. My body you have cast into a sleep, and it knows not that the shadow is here; nor, when it wakes, will the brain be aware of one reminiscence of the words that you utter or the words that you hear."

"What, then, is this shadow that simulates the body? Is it that which in popular language is called the soul?"

"It is not: soul is no shadow."

"What then?"

"Ask not me. Use the wand to invoke Intelligences higher than mine."

"And how?"

"I will tell you not. Of yourself you may learn, if you guide the wand by your own pride of will and desire; but in the hands of him who has learned not the art, the wand has its dangers. Again, I say you have summoned me! Wherefore?"

"Lying shade, I summoned thee not."

"So wouldst thou say to the demons, did they come in their terrible wrath, when the bungler, who knows not the springs that he moves, calls them up unawares, and can neither control nor dispel. Less revengeful than they, I leave thee unharmed, and depart."

"Stay. If, as thou sayest, no command I address to thee—to thee, who art only the image or shadow—can have effect on the body and mind of the being whose likeness thou art, still thou canst tell me what passes now in his brain. Does it now harbor schemes against me through the woman I love? Answer truly."

"I reply for the sleeper, of whom I am more than a likeness, though only the shadow. His thought speaks thus: 'I know, Allen Fenwick, that in thee is the agent I need for achieving the end that I seek. Through the woman thou lovest I hope to subject thee. A grief that will harrow thy heart is at hand; when that grief shall befall, thou wilt welcome my coming. In me alone thy hope will be placed; through me alone wilt thou seek a path out of thy sorrow. I shall ask my conditions: they will make thee my tool and my slave!'"

The shadow waned—it was gone. I did not seek to detain it, nor, had I sought, could I have known by what process. But a new idea now possessed me. This Shadow, then, that had once so appalled and controlled me, was, by its own confession, nothing more than a shadow! It had spoken of higher Intelligences; from them I might learn what the Shadow could not reveal. As I still held the wand firmer and firmer in my grasp, my thoughts grew haughtier and bolder. Could the wand, then, bring those loftier beings thus darkly referred to before me? With that thought, intense and engrossing, I guided the wand towards the space, opening boundless and blue from the casement that let in the skies. The wand no longer resisted my hand.

In a few moments I felt the floors of the room vibrate; the air was darkened: a vaporous, hazy cloud seemed to rise from the ground without the casement; an awe, infinitely more deep and solemn than that which the Scin-Læca had caused in its earliest apparition, curdled through my veins, and stilled the very beat of my heart.

At that moment I heard, without, the voice of Lilian, singing a simple, sacred song which I had learned at my mother's knees, and taught to her the day before: singing low, and as with a warning angel's voice. By an irresistible impulse I dashed the wand to the ground, and bowed my head as I had bowed it when my infant mind comprehended, without an effort, mysteries more solemn than those which perplexed me now. Slowly I raised my eyes, and looked round: the vaporous, hazy cloud had passed away, or melted into the ambient rose-tints amidst which the sun had sunk.

Then, by one of those common reactions from a period of over-strained excitement, there succeeded to that sentiment of arrogance and daring with which these wild, half-conscious invocations had been fostered and sustained, a profound humility, a warning fear.

"What!" said I inly, "have all those sound resolutions, which my reason founded on the wise talk of Julius Faber, melted away in the wrack of haggard, dissolving fancies! Is this my boasted intellect, my vaunted science! I—I, Allen Fenwick, not only the credulous believer, but the blundering practitioner, of an evil magic! Grant what may be possible, however uncomprehended—grant that in this accursed instrument of antique superstition there be some real powers—chemical, magnetic, no matter what—by which the imagination can be aroused, inflamed, deluded, so that it shapes the things I have seen, speaks in the tones I have heard—grant this, shall I keep ever ready, at the caprice of will, a constant tempter to steal away my reason and fool my senses? Or if, on the other hand, I force my sense to admit what all sober men must reject; if I unschool myself to believe that in what I have just experienced there is no mental illusion, that sorcery is a fact, and a demon world has gates which open to a key that a mortal can forge, who but a saint would not shrink from the practice of powers by which each passing thought of ill might find in a fiend its abettor? In either case—in any case—while I keep this direful relic of obsolete arts, I am haunted—cheated out of my senses—unfitted for the uses of life. If, as my ear or my fancy informs me, grief—human grief—is about to befall me, shall I, in the sting of impatient sorrow, have recourse to an aid which, the same voice declares, will reduce me to a tool and a slave? Tool and slave to a being I dread as a foe! Out on these nightmares! And away with the thing that bewitches the brain to conceive them!"

I rose; I took up the wand, holding it so that its hollow

should not rest on the palm of the hand. I stole from the house by the back way, in order to avoid Lilian, whose voice I still heard, singing low, on the lawn in front. I came to a creek, to the bank of which a boat was moored, undid its chain, rowed on to a deep part of the lake, and dropped the wand into its waves. It sank at once; scarcely a ripple furrowed the surface, not a bubble arose from the deep. And, as the boat glided on, the star mirrored itself on the spot where the placid waters had closed over the tempter to evil.

Light at heart I sprang again on the shore, and hastening to Lilian, where she stood on the silvered, shining sward, clasped her to my breast.

"Spirit of my life!" I murmured, "no enchantments for me but thine! Thine are the spells by which creation is beautified, and, in that beauty, hallowed. What though we can see not into the measureless future from the verge of the moment! What though sorrow may smite us while we are dreaming of bliss, let the future not rob me of thee, and a balm will be found for each wound! Love me ever as now, oh, my Lilian; troth to troth, side by side, till the grave!"

"And beyond the grave," answered Lilian softly.

CHAPTER LXII.

Our vows are exchanged at the altar; the rite which made Lilian my wife is performed; we are returned from the church, amongst the hills, in which my fathers had worshipped; the joy-bells that had pealed for my birth had rung for my marriage. Lilian has gone to her room to prepare for our bridal excursion; while the carriage we have hired is waiting at the door. I am detaining her mother on the lawn, seeking to cheer and compose her spirits, painfully affected by that sense of change in the relations of child and parent which makes itself suddenly felt by the parent's heart on the day that secures to the child another heart on which to lean.

But Mrs. Ashleigh's was one of those gentle-womanly natures which, if easily afflicted, are easily consoled. And already smiling through her tears, she was about to quit me and join her daughter, when one of the inn-servants came to me with some letters, which had just been delivered by the postman. As I took them from the servant, Mrs. Ashleigh asked if there were any for her? She expected one from her housekeeper at L——, who had been taken ill in her absence,

and about whom the kind mistress felt anxious. The servant replied that there was no letter for her, but one directed to Miss Ashleigh, which he had just sent up to the young lady.

Mrs. Ashleigh did not doubt that her housekeeper had written to Lilian, whom she had known from the cradle, and to whom she was tenderly attached, instead of to her mistress; and, saying something to me to that effect, quickened her steps towards the house.

I was glancing over my own letters, chiefly from patients, with a rapid eye, when a cry of agony, a cry as if of one suddenly stricken to the heart, pierced my ear—a cry from within the house. "Heavens! was not that Lilian's voice?" The same doubt struck Mrs. Ashleigh, who had already gained the door. She rushed on, disappearing within the threshold, and calling to me to follow. I bounded forward—passed her on the stairs—was in Lilian's room before her.

My bride was on the floor, prostrate, insensible: so still, so colorless! that my first dreadful thought was that life had gone. In her hand was a letter, crushed as with a convulsive, sudden grasp.

It was long before the color came back to her cheek, before the breath was perceptible on her lip. She woke, but not to health, not to sense. Hours were passed in violent convulsions, in which I momentarily feared her death. To these succeeded stupor, lethargy, not benignant sleep. That night—my bridal night—I passed as in some chamber to which I had been summoned to save youth from the grave. At length—at length, life was rescued, was assured! Life came back, but the mind was gone. She knew me not, nor her mother. She spoke little and faintly: in the words she uttered there was no reason.

I pass hurriedly on; my experience here was in fault, my skill ineffectual. Day followed day, and no ray came back to the darkened brain. We bore, her, by gentle stages, to London. I was sanguine of good result from skill more consummate than mine, and more specially devoted to diseases of the mind. I summoned the first advisers. In vain! In vain!

CHAPTER LXIII.

And the cause of this direful shock? Not this time could it be traced to some evil spell, some phantasmal influence. The cause was clear, and might have produced effects as sinister on

nerves of stronger fibre if accompanied by a heart as delicately sensitive, an honor as exquisitely pure.

The letter found in her hand was without name; it was dated from L——, and bore the postmark of that town. It conveyed to Lilian, in the biting words which female malice can make so sharp, the tale we had sought sedulously to guard from her ear—her flight, the construction that scandal put upon it. It affected for my blind infatuation a contemptuous pity; it asked her to pause before she brought on the name I offered to her an indelible disgrace. If she so decided, she was warned not to return to L——, or to prepare there for the sentence that would exclude her from the society of her own sex. I cannot repeat more, I cannot minute down all that the letter expressed or implied, to wither the orange blossoms in a bride's wreath. The heart that took in the venom cast its poison on the brain, and the mind fled before the presence of a thought so deadly to all the ideas which its innocence had heretofore conceived.

I knew not whom to suspect of the malignity of this mean and miserable outrage, nor did I much care to know. The handwriting, though evidently disguised, was that of a woman, and, therefore, had I discovered the author, my manhood would have forbidden me the idle solace of revenge. Mrs. Poyntz, however resolute and pitiless her hostility when once aroused, was not without a certain largeness of nature irreconcilable with the most dastardly of all the weapons that envy or hatred can supply to the vile. She had too lofty a self-esteem and too decorous a regard for the moral sentiment of the world that she typified, to do, or connive at, an act which degrades the gentlewoman. Putting her aside, what other female enemy had Lilian provoked? No matter! What other woman at L—— was worth the condescension of a conjecture!

After listening to all that the ablest of my professional brethren in the metropolis could suggest to guide me, and trying in vain their remedies, I brought back my charge to L——. Retaining my former residence for the visits of patients, I engaged, for the privacy of my home, a house two miles from the town, secluded in its own grounds and guarded by high walls.

Lilian's mother removed to my mournful dwelling-place. Abbots' House, in the centre of that tattling coterie, had become distasteful to her, and to me it was associated with thoughts of anguish and of terror. I could not, without a shudder, have entered its grounds; could not, without a stab at the heart, have seen again the old fairy-land round the Monks'

Well, nor the dark cedar-tree under which Lilian's hand had been placed in mine: and a superstitious remembrance, banished while Lilian's angel face had brightened the fatal precincts, now revived in full force. The dying man's curse—had it not been fulfilled?

A new occupant for the old house was found within a week after Mrs. Ashleigh had written from London to a house-agent at L——, intimating her desire to dispose of the lease. Shortly before we had gone to Windermere Miss Brabazon had become enriched by a liberal life-annuity bequeathed to her by her uncle, Sir Phelim. Her means thus enabled her to move, from the comparatively humble lodging she had hitherto occupied, to Abbots' House; but just as she had there commenced a series of ostentatious entertainments, implying an ambitious desire to dispute with Mrs. Poyntz the sovereignty of the Hill, she was attacked by some severe malady which appeared complicated with spinal disease, and after my return to L—— I sometimes met her, on the spacious platform of the Hill, drawn along slowly in a Bath chair, her livid face peering forth from piles of Indian shawls and Siberian furs, and the gaunt figure of Dr. Jones stalking by her side, taciturn and gloomy as some sincere mourner who conducts to the grave the patron on whose life he himself had conveniently lived. It was in the dismal month of February that I returned to L——, and I took possession of my blighted nuptial home on the anniversary of the very day in which I had passed through the dead dumb world from the naturalist's gloomy death-room.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Lilian's wondrous gentleness of nature did not desert her in the suspension of her reason. She was habitually calm—very silent; when she spoke it was rarely on earthly things—on things familiar to her past—things one could comprehend. Her thought seemed to have quitted the earth, seeking refuge in some imaginary heaven. She spoke of wanderings with her father as if he were living still; she did not seem to understand the meaning we attach to the word Death. She would sit for hours murmuring to herself: when one sought to catch the words, they seemed in converse with invisible spirits. We found it cruel to disturb her at such times, for if left unmolested, her face was serene—more serenely beautiful than I had seen it even in our happiest hours; but when we called her

back to the wrecks of her real life, her eye became troubled, restless, anxious, and she would sigh—oh, so heavily! At times, if we did not seem to observe her, she would quietly resume her once favorite accomplishments—drawing, music. And in these her young excellence was still apparent, only the drawings were strange and fantastic; they had a resemblance to those with which the painter Blake, himself a visionary, illustrated the Poems of the "Night Thoughts" and "The Grave." Faces of exquisite loveliness, forms of aërial grace, coming forth from the bells of flowers, or floating upwards amidst the spray of fountains, their outlines melting away in fountain or in flower. So with her music: her mother could not recognize the airs she played, for a while so sweetly and with so ineffable a pathos, that one could scarcely hear her without weeping; and then would come, as if involuntarily, an abrupt discord, and, starting, she would cease and look around, disquieted, aghast.

And still she did not recognize Mrs. Ashleigh nor myself as her mother, her husband; but she had by degrees learned to distinguish us both from others. To her mother she gave no name, seemed pleased to see her, but not sensibly to miss her when away; me she called her brother: if longer absent than usual, me she missed. When, after the toils of the day, I came to join her, even if she spoke not, her sweet face brightened. When she sang, she beckoned me to come near to her, and looked at me fixedly, with eyes ever tender, often tearful; when she drew, she would pause and glance over her shoulder to see that I was watching her, and point to the drawings with a smile of strange significance, as if they conveyed, in some covert allegory, messages meant for me; so at least, I interpreted her smile, and taught myself to say: "Yes, Lilian, I understand!"

And more than once, when I had so answered, she rose and kissed my forehead. I thought my heart would have broken when I felt that spirit-like melancholy kiss.

And yet how marvellously the human mind teaches itself to extract consolations from its sorrows. The least wretched of my hours were those I passed in that saddened room, seeking how to establish fragments of intercourse, invent signs, by which each might interpret each, between the intellect I had so laboriously cultured, so arrogantly vaunted, and the fancies wandering through the dark, deprived of their guide in reason. It was something even of joy to feel myself needed for her guardianship, endeared and yearned for still by some unshat-

tered instinct of her heart; and when parting from her for the night, I stole the moment in which on her soft face seemed resting least of shadow, to ask, in a trembling whisper: "Lilian, are the angels watching over you?" and she would answer "Yes," sometimes in words, sometimes with a mysterious happy smile—then—then I went to my lonely room, comforted and thankful.

CHAPTER LXV.

The blow that had fallen on my hearth effectually, inevitably killed all the slander that might have troubled me in joy. Before the awe of a great calamity the small passions of a mean malignity slink abashed. I had requested Mrs. Ashleigh not to mention the vile letter which Lilian had received. I would not give a triumph to the unknown calumniator, nor wring forth her vain remorse, by the pain of acknowledging an indignity to my darling's honor; yet, somehow or other, the true cause of Lilian's affliction had crept out—perhaps through the talk of servants—and the public shock was universal. By one of those instincts of justice that lie deep in human hearts, though in ordinary moments overlaid by many a worldly layer, all felt (all mothers felt, especially) that innocence alone could have been so unprepared for reproach. The explanation I had previously given, discredited then, was now accepted without a question. Lilian's present state accounted for all that ill nature had before misconstrued. Her good name was restored to its maiden whiteness by the fate that had severed the ties of the bride. The formal dwellers on the Hill vied with the franker, warmer-hearted household of Low Town in the nameless attentions by which sympathy and respect are rather delicately indicated than noisily proclaimed. Could Lilian have then recovered and been sensible of its repentant homage, how reverently that petty world would have thronged around her! And, ah! could fortune and man's esteem have atoned for the blight of hopes that had been planted and cherished on ground beyond their reach, ambition and pride might have been well contented with the largeness of the exchange that courted their acceptance. Patients on patients crowded on me. Sympathy with my sorrow seemed to create and endear a more trustful belief in my skill. But the profession I had once so enthusiastically loved became to me wearisome, insipid, distasteful; the kindness heaped on me gave no comfort, it but brought before me more vividly the conviction that

it came too late to avail me: it could not restore to me the mind, the love, the life of my life, which lay dark and shattered in the brain of my guileless Lilian. Secretly I felt a sullen resentment. I knew that to the crowd the resentment was unjust. The world itself is but an appearance; who can blame it if appearances guide its laws? But to those who had been detached from the crowd by the professions of friendship—those who, when the slander was yet new, and might have been awed into silence had they stood by my side—to the pressure of *their* hands, *now*, I had no response.

Against Mrs. Poyntz, above all others, I bore a remembrance of unrelaxed, unmitigable indignation. Her schemes for her daughter's marriage had triumphed: Jane was Mrs. Ashleigh Sumner. Her mind was, perhaps, softened now that the object which had sharpened its worldly faculties was accomplished; but in vain, on first hearing of my affliction, had this she-Machiavel owned a humane remorse, and, with all her keen comprehension of each facility that circumstance gave to her will, availed herself of the general compassion to strengthen the popular reaction in favor of Lilian's assaulted honor; in vain had she written to me with a gentleness of sympathy foreign to her habitual characteristics; in vain besought me to call on her; in vain waylaid and accosted me with a humility that almost implored forgiveness; I vouchsafed no reproach, but I could imply no pardon. I put between her and my great sorrow the impenetrable wall of my freezing silence.

One word of hers at the time that I had so pathetically besought her aid, and the parrot-flock that repeated her very whisper in noisy shrillness, would have been as loud to defend as it had been to defame; that vile letter might never have been written. Whoever its writer, it surely was one of the babblers who took their malice itself from the jest or the nod of their female despot; and the writer might have justified herself in saying she did but coarsely proclaim what the oracle of worldly opinion, and the early friend of Lilian's own mother, had authorized her to believe.

By degrees, the bitterness at my heart diffused itself to the circumference of the circle in which my life went its cheerless mechanical round. That cordial brotherhood with his patients, which is the true physician's happiest gift and humanest duty, forsook my breast. The warning words of Mrs. Poyntz had come true. A patient that monopolized my thoughts awaited me at my own hearth! My conscience became troubled; I felt that my skill was lessened. I said to myself: "The phy-

sician who, on entering the sick room, feels, while there, something that distracts the finest powers of his intellect from the sufferer's case, is unfit for his calling." A year had scarcely passed since my fatal wedding-day, before I had formed a resolution to quit L—— and abandon my profession: and my resolution was confirmed, and my goal determined, by a letter I received from Julius Faber.

I had written at length to him, not many days after the blow that had fallen on me, stating all circumstances as calmly and clearly as my grief would allow, for I held his skill at a higher estimate than that of any living brother of my art, and I was not without hope in the efficacy of his advice. The letter I now received from him had been begun and continued at some length, before my communication reached him. And this earlier portion contained animated and cheerful descriptions of his Australian life and home which contrasted with the sorrowful tone of the supplement written in reply to the tidings with which I had wrung his friendly and tender heart. In this, the latter part of his letter, he suggested that if time had wrought no material change for the better, it might be advisable to try the effect of foreign travel. Scenes entirely new might stimulate observation, and the observation of things external withdraw the sense from that brooding over images delusively formed within, which characterized the kind of mental alienation I had described. "Let any intellect create for itself a visionary world, and all reasonings built on it are fallacious: the visionary world vanishes in proportion as we can arouse a predominant interest in the actual."

This grand authority, who owed half his consummate skill as a practitioner to the scope of his knowledge as a philosopher, then proceeded to give me a hope which I had not dared, of myself, to form. He said: "I distinguish the case you so minutely detail from that insanity which is reason lost; here it seems rather to be reason held in suspense. Where there is hereditary predisposition, where there is organic change of structure in the brain—nay, where there is that kind of insanity which takes the epithet of moral, whereby the whole character becomes so transformed that the prime element of sound understanding, conscience itself, is either erased or warped into the sanction of what, in a healthful state, it would most disapprove, it is only charlatans who promise effectual cure. But here I assume that there is no hereditary taint; here I am convinced, from my own observation, that the nobility of the organs, all fresh as yet in the vigor of youth, would rather submit

to death than to the permanent overthrow of their equilibrium in reason; here, where you tell me the character preserves all its moral attributes of gentleness and purity, and but over-indulges its own early habit of estranged contemplation; here, without deceiving you in false kindness, I give you the guarantee of my experience when I bid you 'hope!' I am persuaded that, sooner or later, the mind, thus for a time affected, will right itself; because here, in the cause of the malady we do but deal with the nervous system. And *that*, once righted, and the mind once disciplined in those practical duties which conjugal life necessitates, the malady itself will never return; never be transmitted to the children on whom your wife's restoration to health may permit you to count hereafter. If the course of travel I recommend and the prescriptions I conjoin with that course fail you, let me know; and though I would fain close my days in this land, I will come to you. I love you as my son, I will tend your wife as my daughter."

Foreign travel! The idea smiled on me. Julius Faber's companionship, sympathy, matchless skill! The very thought seemed as a raft to a drowning mariner. I now read more attentively the earlier portions of his letter. They described, in glowing colors, the wondrous country in which he had fixed his home; the joyous elasticity of its atmosphere; the freshness of its primitive, pastoral life; the strangeness of its scenery, with a Flora and a Fauna which have no similitudes in the ransacked quarters of the Old World. And the strong impulse seized me to transfer to the solitudes of that blithesome and hardy Nature a spirit no longer at home in the civilized haunts of men, and household gods that shrunk from all social eyes, and would fain have found a wilderness for the desolate hearth, on which they had ceased to be sacred if unveiled. As if to give practical excuse and reason for the idea that seized me, Julius Faber mentioned, incidentally, that the house and property of a wealthy speculator in his immediate neighborhood were on sale at a price which seemed to me alluringly trivial, and, according to his judgment, far below the value they would soon reach in the hands of a more patient capitalist. He wrote at the period of the agricultural panic in the colony which preceded the discovery of its earliest gold-fields. But his geological science had convinced him that strata within and around the property now for sale were auriferous, and his intelligence enabled him to predict how inevitably man would be attracted towards the gold, and how surely the gold would fertilize the soil and enrich its owners. He described the house

thus to be sold—in case I might know of a purchaser. It had been built at a cost unusual in those early times, and by one who clung to English tastes amidst Australian wilds, so that in this purchase a settler would escape the hardships he had then ordinarily to encounter: it was, in short, a home to which a man more luxurious than I might bear a bride with wants less simple than those which now sufficed for my darling Lilian.

This communication dwelt on my mind through the avocations of the day on which I received it, and in the evening I read all, except the supplement, aloud to Mrs. Ashleigh in her daughter's presence. I desired to see if Faber's descriptions of the country and its life, which in themselves were extremely spirited and striking, would arouse Lilian's interest. At first she did not seem to heed me while I read, but when I came to Faber's loving account of little Amy, Lilian turned her eyes towards me, and evidently listened with attention. He wrote how the child had already become the most useful person in the simple household. How watchful the quickness of the heart had made the service of the eye: all their associations of comfort had grown round her active, noiseless movements; it was she who had contrived to monopolize the management, or supervision of all that added to home the nameless, interior charm. Under her eyes the rude furniture of the log-house grew inviting with English neatness; she took charge of the dairy; she had made the garden gay with flowers selected from the wild, and suggested the trellised walk, already covered with hardy vine. She was their confidant in every plan of improvement, their comforter in every anxious doubt, their nurse in every passing ailment, her very smile a refreshment in the weariness of daily toil. "How all that is best in womanhood," wrote the old man, with the enthusiasm which no time had reft from his hearty, healthful genius,—"How all that is best in womanhood is here opening fast into flower from the bud of the infant's soul! The atmosphere seems to suit it—the child-woman in the child-world!"

I heard Lilian sigh; I looked towards her furtively; tears stood in her softened eyes; her lip was quivering. Presently, she began to rub her right hand over the left—over the wedding-ring—at first, slowly; then with quicker movement.

"It is not here," she said impatiently; "it is *not* here!"

"What is not here?" asked Mrs. Ashleigh, hanging over her.

Lilian lent back her head on her mother's bosom, and answered faintly:

"The stain! Some one said there was a stain on this hand. I do not see it—do you?"

"There is no stain, never was," said I; "the hand is white as your own innocence, or the lily from which you take your name."

"Hush! you do not know my name. I will whisper it. Soft!—my name is Nightshade! Do you want to know where the lily is now, brother? I will tell you. There, in that letter—you call her Amy—she is the lily—take her to your breast—hide her. Hist! what are those bells? Marriage-bells. Do not let her hear them. For there is a cruel wind that whispers the bells, and the bells ring out what it whispers, louder and louder,

'Stain on lily,
Shame on lily,
Wither lily.'

If she hears what the wind whispers to the bells, she will creep away into the dark, and then she, too, will turn to Nightshade."

"Lilian, look up, awake! You have been in a long, long dream: it is passing away. Lilian, my beloved, my blessed Lilian!"

Never till then had I heard from her even so vague an illusion to the fatal calumny, and its dreadful effect, and while her words now pierced my heart, it beat, amongst its pangs, with a thrilling hope.

But alas! the idea that had gleamed upon her had vanished already. She murmured something about Circles of Fire, and a Veiled Woman in black garments; became restless, agitated, and unconscious of our presence, and finally sank into a heavy sleep.

That night (my room was next to hers with the intervening door open), I heard her cry out. I hastened to her side. She was still asleep, but there was an anxious laboring expression on her young face, and yet not an expression wholly of pain, for her lips were parted with a smile—that glad yet troubled smile with which one who has been revolving some subject of perplexity or fear, greets a sudden thought that seems to solve the riddle, or prompt the escape from danger; and as I softly took her hand she returned my gentle pressure, and inclining towards me said, still in sleep:

"Let us go."

"Whither?" I answered, under my breath, so as not to awake her; "Is it to see the child of whom I read, and the land that is blooming out of the earth's childhood?"

"Out of the dark into the light; where the leaves do not change; where the night is our day, and the winter our summer. Let us go—let us go!"

"We will go. Dream on undisturbed, my bride. Oh, that the dream could tell you that my love has not changed in our sorrow, holier and deeper than on the day in which our vows were exchanged! In you still all my hopes fold their wings: where you are, there still I myself have my dreamland!"

The sweet face grew bright as I spoke; all trouble left the smile; softly she drew her hand from my clasp, and rested it for a moment on my bended head, as if in blessing.

I rose; stole back to my own room, closing the door, lest the sob I could not stifle should mar her sleep.

CHAPTER LXVI.

I UNFOLDED my new prospects to Mrs. Ashleigh. She was more easily reconciled to them than I could have supposed, judging by her habits, which were naturally indolent, and averse to all that disturbed their even tenor. But the great grief which had befallen her had roused up that strength of devotion which lies dormant in all hearts that are capable of loving another more than self. With her full consent I wrote to Faber, communicating my intentions, instructing him to purchase the property he had so commended, and inclosing my banker's order for the amount, on an Australian firm. I now announced my intention to retire from my profession; made prompt arrangements with a successor to my practice; disposed of my two houses at L——; fixed the day of my departure. Vanity was dead within me, or I might have been gratified by the sensation which the news of my design created. My faults became at once forgotten: such good qualities as I might possess were exaggerated. The public regret vented and consoled itself in a costly testimonial, to which even the poorest of my patients insisted on the privilege to contribute, graced with an inscription flattering enough to have served for the epitaph on some great man's tomb. No one who has served an art and striven for a name, is a stoic to the esteem of others, and sweet indeed would such honors have been to me had not publicity itself seemed a wrong to the sanctity of that affliction which set Lilian apart from the movement and the glories of the world.

The two persons most active in "getting up" this testimonial were, nominally, Colonel Poyntz—in truth, his wife—and my

old disparager, Mr. Vigors! It is long since my narrative has referred to Mr. Vigors. It is due to him now to state that, in his capacity of magistrate, and in his own way, he had been both active and delicate in the inquiries set on foot for Lilian during the unhappy time in which she had wandered, spell-bound, from her home. He, alone, of all the more influential magnates of the town, had upheld her innocence against the gossip that aspersed it; and during the last trying year of my residence at L——, he had sought me, with frank and manly confessions of his regret for his former prejudice against me, and assurances of the respect in which he had held me ever since my marriage—marriage but in rite—with Lilian. He had then, strong in his ruling passion, besought me to consult his clairvoyants as to her case. I declined this invitation, so as not to affront him—declined it, not as I should once have done, but with no word nor look of incredulous disdain. The fact was, that I had conceived a solemn terror of all practices and theories out of the beaten track of sense and science. Perhaps in my refusal I did wrong. I know not. I was afraid of my own imagination. He continued not less friendly in spite of my refusal. And, such are the vicissitudes in human feeling, I parted from him whom I had regarded as my most bigoted foe with a warmer sentiment of kindness than for any of those on whom I had counted on friendship. *He* had not deserted Lilian. It was not so with Mrs. Poyntz. I would have paid tenfold the value of the testimonial to have erased, from the list of those who subscribed to it, her husband's name.

The day before I quitted L——, and some weeks after I had, in fact, renounced my practice, I received an urgent entreaty from Miss Brabazon to call on her. She wrote in lines so blurred that I could with difficulty decipher them, that she was very ill, given over by Dr. Jones, who had been attending her. She implored my opinion.

CHAPTER LXVII.

On reaching the house, a formal man-servant, with indifferent face, transferred me to the guidance of a hired nurse, who led me up the stairs, and, before I was well aware of it, into the room in which Dr. Lloyd had died. Widely different, indeed, the aspect of the walls, the character of the furniture. The dingy paper-hangings were replaced by airy muslins, showing a rose-colored ground through their fanciful openwork; luxurious fauteuils, gilded wardrobes, full-length mirrors, a

toilet-table tricked out with lace and ribbons and glittering with an array of silver gewgaws and jewelled trinkets—all transformed the sick chamber of the simple man of science to a boudoir of death for the vain coquette. But the room itself, in its high lattice and heavy ceiling, was the same—as the coffin itself has the same confines whether it be rich in velvets and bright with blazoning, or rude as a pauper's shell.

And the bed, with its silken coverlid, and its pillows edged with the thread-work of Louvain, stood in the same sharp angle as that over which had flickered the frowning smoke-reek above the dying resentful foe. As I approached, a man, who was seated beside the sufferer, turned round his face, and gave me a silent, kindly nod of recognition. He was Mr. C., one of the clergy of the town, the one with whom I had the most frequently come into contact wherever the physician resigns to the priest the language that bids man hope. Mr. C., as a preacher, was renowned for his touching eloquence; as a pastor, revered for his benignant piety; as friend and neighbor, beloved for a sweetness of nature which seemed to regulate all the movements of a mind eminently masculine by the beat of a heart tender as the gentlest woman's.

This good man, then whispering something to the sufferer which I did not overhear, stole towards me, took me by the hand, and said, also in a whisper: "Be merciful as Christians are." He led me to the bedside, there left me, went out, and closed the door.

"Do you think I am really dying, Dr. Fenwick," said a feeble voice, "I fear Dr. Jones has misunderstood my case. I wish I had called you in at the first—but—but I could not—I could not! Will you feel my pulse? Don't you think you could do me good ?"

I had no need to feel the pulse in that skeleton wrist; the aspect of the face sufficed to tell me that death was drawing near.

Mechanically, however, I went through the hackneyed formulæ of professional questions. This vain ceremony done, as gently and delicately as I could, I implied the expediency of concluding, if not yet settled, those affairs which relate to this world.

"This duty," I said, "in relieving the mind from care for others to whom we owe the forethought of affection, often relieves the body also of many a gnawing pain, and sometimes, to the surprise of the most experienced physician, prolongs life itself."

"Ah," said the old maid peevishly, "I understand! But it is not my will that troubles me. I should not be left to a nurse from a hospital if my relations did not know that my annuity dies with me; and I forestalled it in furnishing this house, Dr. Fenwick, and all these pretty things will be sold to pay those horrid tradesmen! Very hard! so hard!—just as I had got things about me in the way I always said I would have them if I could ever afford it! I always said I would have my bedroom hung with muslin, like dear Lady L.'s; and the drawing-room in geranium-colored silk; so pretty. You have not seen it: you would not know the house, Dr. Fenwick. And just when all is finished, to be taken away and thrust into the grave. It is so cruel!" And she began to weep. Her emotion brought on a violent paroxysm, which when she recovered from it, had produced one of these startling changes of mind that are sometimes witnessed before death; changes whereby the whole character of a life seems to undergo solemn transformation. The hard will become gentle, the proud meek, the frivolous earnest. That awful moment when the things of earth pass away like dissolving scenes, leaving death visible on the background by the glare that shoots up in the last flicker of life's lamp.

And when she lifted her haggard face from my shoulder, and heard my pitying, soothing voice, it was not the grief of a trifler at the loss of fondled toys that spoke in the fallen lines of her lip, in the woe of her pleading eyes.

"So this is death," she said. "I feel it hurrying on. I must speak. I promised Mr. C. that I would. Forgive me, can you—can you? That letter—that letter to Lilian Ashleigh, I wrote it! Oh, do not look at me so terribly; I never thought it could do such evil! And am I not punished enough? I truly believed when I wrote that Miss Ashleigh was deceiving you, and once I was silly enough to fancy that you might have liked me. But I had another motive; I had been so poor all my life—I had become rich unexpectedly; I set my heart on this—I had always fancied it—and I thought if I could prevent Miss Ashleigh marrying you, and scare her and her mother from coming back to L——, I could get the house. And I did get it. What for?—to die. I had not been here a week before I got the hurt that is killing me—a fall down the stairs—coming out of this very room; the stairs had been polished. If I had stayed in my old lodging, it would not have happened. Oh, say you forgive me! Say, say it, even if you do not feel you can! Say it!" And the miserable woman grasped me by the arm as Dr. Lloyd had grasped me.

I shaded my averted face with my hands; my heart heaved with the agony of my suppressed passion. A wrong, however deep, only to myself, I could have pardoned without effort; such a wrong to Lilian—no! I could not say, "I forgive."

The dying wretch was perhaps more appalled by my silence than she would have been by my reproach. Her voice grew shrill in her despair.

"You will not pardon me! I shall die with your curse on my head. Mercy! mercy! That good man, Mr. C., assured me you would be merciful. Have *you* never wronged another? Has the Evil One never tempted *you?*"

Then I spoke in broken accents: "Me! Oh, had it been I whom you defamed—but a young creature so harmless, so unoffending, and for so miserable a motive!"

"But I tell you, I swear to you. I never dreamed I could cause such sorrow; and that young man, that Margrave, put it into my head!"

"Margrave! He had left L—— long before that letter was written."

"But he came back for a day just before I wrote: it was the very day. I met him in the lane yonder. He asked after you—after Miss Ashleigh; and when he spoke he laughed, and I said: 'Miss Ashleigh had been ill, and was gone away,' and he laughed again. And I thought he knew more than he would tell me, so I asked him if he supposed Mrs. Ashleigh would come back, and said how much I should like to take this house if she did not; and again he laughed, and said, 'Birds never stay in the nest after the young ones are hurt,' and went away singing. When I got home, his laugh and his song haunted me. I thought I saw him still in my room, prompting me to write, and I sat down and wrote. Oh, pardon, pardon me! I have been a foolish poor creature, but never meant to do such harm. The Evil One tempted me! There he is near me now! I see him yonder! there, at the doorway. He comes to claim me! As you hope for mercy yourself, free me from him! Forgive me!"

I made an effort over myself. In naming Margrave as her tempter, the woman had suggested an excuse, echoed from that innermost cell of my mind, which I recoiled from gazing into, for there I should behold his image. Inexpiable though the injury she had wrought against me, and mine, still the woman was human—fellow-creature—like myself—but HE?

I took the pale hand that still pressed my arm, and said, with firm voice:

"Be comforted. In the name of Lilian my wife, I forgive you for her and for me as freely and as fully as we are enjoined by Him, against whose precepts the best of us daily sin, to forgive—we children of wrath—to forgive one another!"

"Heaven bless you!—oh, bless you!" she murmured, sinking back upon her pillow.

"Ah!" thought I, "what if the pardon I grant for a wrong far deeper than I inflicted on him whose imprecation smote me in this chamber, should indeed be received as atonement, and this blessing on the lips of the dying annul the dark curse that the dead has left on my path through the Valley of the Shadow!"

I left my patient sleeping quietly—the sleep that precedes the last. As I went down the stairs into the hall, I saw Mrs. Poyntz standing at the threshold, speaking to the man-servant and the nurse.

I would have passed her with a formal bow, but she stopped me.

"I came to inquire after poor Miss Brabazon," said she. "You can tell me more than the servants can: is there no hope?"

"Let the nurse go up and watch beside her. She may pass away in the sleep into which she has fallen."

"Allen Fenwick, I must speak with you—nay, but for a few minutes. I hear that you leave L—— to-morrow. It is scarcely among the chances of life that we should meet again." While thus saying, she drew me along the lawn down the path that led towards her own home. "I wish," said she earnestly, "that you could part with a kindlier feeling towards me; but I can scarcely expect it. Could I put myself in your place, and be moved by your feelings, I know that I should be implacable; but I—"

"But you, madam, are The World! and the World governs itself, and dictates to others, by laws which seem harsh to those who ask from its favor the services which the World cannot tender, for the World admits favorites but ignores friends. You did but act to me as the World ever acts to those who mistake its favor for its friendship."

"It is true," said Mrs. Poyntz, with blunt candor; and we continued to walk on silently. At length, she said, abruptly: "But do you not rashly deprive yourself of your only consolation in sorrow? When the heart suffers, does your skill admit any remedy like occupation to the mind? Yet you abandon that occupation to which your mind is most accustomed; you desert your career; you turn aside, in the midst of the race,

from the fame which awaits at the goal; you go back from civilization itself, and dream that all your intellectual cravings can find content in the life of a herdsman, amidst the monotony of a wild! No, you will repent, for you are untrue to your mind!"

"I am sick of the word 'mind'!" said I bitterly. And therewith I relapsed into musing.

The enigmas which had foiled my intelligence in the unravelled Sibyl Book of Nature were mysteries strange to every man's normal practice of thought, even if reducible to the fraudulent impressions of outward sense; for illusions in a brain otherwise healthy, suggest problems in our human organization which the colleges that record them rather guess at than solve. But the blow which had shattered my life had been dealt by the hand of a fool. Here, there were no mystic enchantments. Motives the most commonplace and paltry, suggested to a brain as trivial and shallow as ever made the frivolity of woman a theme for the satire of poets, had sufficed, in devastating the field of my affections, to blast the uses for which I had cultured my mind; and had my intellect been as great as heaven ever gave to man, it would have been as vain a shield as mine against the shaft that had lodged in my heart. While I had, indeed, been preparing my reason and my fortitude to meet such perils, weird and marvellous, as those by which tales round the winter fireside scare the credulous child, a contrivance so vulgar and hackneyed that not a day passes but what some hearth is vexed by an anonymous libel, had wrought a calamity more dread than aught which my dark guess into the Shadow-Land unpierced by Philosophy could trace to the prompting of malignant witchcraft. So, ever this truth runs through all legends of ghost and demon—through the uniform records of what wonder accredits and science rejects as the supernatural—lo! the dread machinery whose wheels roll through Hades! What need such awful engines for such mean results? The first blockhead we meet in our walk to our grocer's can tell us more than the ghost tells us; the poorest envy we ever aroused hurts us more than the demon. How true an interpreter is Genius to Hell as to Earth! The Fiend comes to Faust, the tired seeker of knowledge; Heaven and Hell stake their cause in the Mortal's temptation. And what does the Fiend to astonish the Mortal? Turn wine into fire, turn love into crime. We need no Mephistopheles to accomplish these marvels every day!

Thus silently thinking, I walked by the side of the world-

wise woman; and when she next spoke, I looked up, and saw that we were at the Monks' Well, where I had first seen Lilian gazing into heaven!

Mrs. Poyntz had, as we walked, placed her hand on my arm, and, turning abruptly from the path into the glade, I found myself standing by her side in the scene where a new sense of being had first disclosed to my sight the hues with which Love, the passionate beautifier, turns into purple and gold the gray of the common air. Thus, when romance has ended in sorrow, and the Beautiful fades from the landscape, the trite and positive forms of life banished for a time, reappear, and deepen our mournful remembrance of the glories they replace. And the Woman of the World, finding how little I was induced to respond to her when she had talked of myself, began to speak, in her habitual, clear ringing accents, of her own social schemes and devices:

"I shall miss you when you are gone, Allen Fenwick, for though, during the last year or so, all actual intercourse between us has ceased, yet my interest in you gave some occupation to my thoughts when I sat alone, having lost my main object of ambition in settling my daughter, and having no longer any one in the house with whom I could talk of the future, or for whom I could form a project. It is so wearisome to count the changes which pass within us, that we take interest in the changes that pass without. Poyntz still has his weather-glass; I have no longer my Jane."

"I cannot linger with you on this spot," said I impatiently, turning back into the path; she followed, treading over fallen leaves. And unheeding my interrpution, she thus continued her hard talk:

"But I am not sick of my mind as you seem to be of yours; I am only somewhat tired of the little cage in which, since it has been alone, it ruffles its plumes against the flimsy wires that confine it from wider space. I shall take up my home for a time with the new-married couple: they want me. Ashleigh Sumner has come into Parliament. He means to attend regularly and work hard, but he does not like Jane to go into the world by herself, and he wishes her to go into the world, because he wants a wife to display his wealth for the improvement of his position. In Ashleigh Sumner's house, I shall have ample scope for my energies, such as they are. I have a curiosity to see the few that perch on the wheels of the State, and say 'It is we who move the wheels!' It will amuse me to learn if I can maintain in a capital the authority I have

won in a country town; if not, I can but return to my small principality. Wherever I live I must sway, not serve. If I succeed, as I ought, for in Jane's beauty and Ashleigh's fortune I have materials for the woof of ambition, wanting which here, I fall asleep over my knitting—if I succeed, there will be enough to occupy the rest of my life. Ashleigh Sumner must be a power; the power will be represented and enjoyed by my child, and created and maintained by me! Allen Fenwick, do as I do. Be world with the world, and it will only be in moments of spleen and chagrin that you will sigh to think that the heart may be void when the mind is full. Confess you envy me while you listen."

"Not so; all that to you seems so great, appears to me so small! Nature alone is always grand, in her terrors as well as her charms. The World for you, Nature for me. Farewell!"

"Nature," said Mrs. Poyntz compassionately. "Poor Allen Fenwick! Nature indeed—intellectual suicide! Nay, shake hands, then, if for the last time."

So we shook hands and parted, where the wicket-gate and the stone stairs separated my blighted fairy-land from the common thoroughfare.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

That night as I was employed in collecting the books and manuscripts which I proposed to take with me, including my long-suspended physiological work, and such standard authorities as I might want to consult or refer to in the portions yet incompleted, my servant entered to inform me, in answer to the inquiries I had sent him to make, that Miss Brabazon had peacefully breathed her last an hour before. Well! my pardon had perhaps soothed her last moments: but how unavailing her death-bed repentance to undo the wrong she had done!

I turned from that thought, and, glancing at the work into which I had thrown all my learning, methodized into system with all my art, I recalled the pity which Mrs. Poyntz had expressed for my meditated waste of mind. The tone of superiority which this incarnation of common-sense, accompanied by uncommon will, assumed over all that was too deep or too high for her comprehension, had sometimes amused me; thinking over it now, it piqued. I said to myself: "After all, I shall bear with me such solace as intellectual occupation can afford. I shall have leisure to complete this labor, and a record that I have lived and thought may outlast all the honors which

worldly ambition may bestow upon an Ashleigh Sumner!" And, as I so murmured, my hand, mechanically, selecting the books I needed, fell on the Bible that Julius Faber had given to me.

It opened at the Second Book of Esdras, which our Church places amongst the Apocrypha, and is generally considered by scholars to have been written in the first or second century of the Christian era.* But in which the questions raised by man in the remotest ages, to which we can trace back his desire "to comprehend the ways of the Most High," are invested with a grandeur of thought and sublimity of word to which I know of no parallel in writers we call profane.

My eye fell on this passage in the lofty argument between the Angel whose name was Uriel, and the Prophet, perplexed by his own cravings for knowledge:

"He (the Angel) answered me, and said, I went into a forest into a plain, and the trees took counsel,

"And said, Come, let us go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away before us, and that we may make us more woods.

"The floods of the sea also in like manner took counsel, and said, Come, let us go up and subdue the woods of the plain, that there also we may make us another country.

"The thought of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it.

"The thought of the floods of the sea came likewise to nought, for the sand stood up and stopped them.

"If thou wert judge now betwixt the two, whom wouldst thou begin to justify? or whom wouldst thou condemn?

"I answered and said, Verily it is a foolish thought that they both have devised; for the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea also hath his place to bear his floods.

"Then answered he me, and said, Thou hast given a right judgment; but why judgest thou not thyself also?

"For like as the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea to his floods: even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but which is upon the earth: and He that dwelleth above the heavens may only understand the things that are above the height of the heavens."

I paused at those words, and closing the Sacred Volume fell into deep, unquiet thought.

* Such is the supposition of Jahn. Dr. Lee, however, is of opinion that the author was contemporary, and, indeed, identical, with the author of the Book of Enoch.

CHAPTER LXIX.

I HAD hoped that the voyage would produce some beneficial effect upon Lilian; but no effect, good or bad, was perceptible, except, perhaps, a deeper silence, a gentler calm. She loved to sit on deck when the nights were fair, and the stars mirrored on the deep. And once, thus, as I stood beside her, bending over the rail of the vessel, and gazing on the long wake of light which the moon made amidst the darkness of an ocean to which no shore could be seen, I said to myself: "Where is my track of light through the measureless future? Would that I could believe as I did when a child! Woe is me, that all the reasonings I take from my knowledge should lead me away from the comfort which the peasant who mourns finds in faith! Why should riddles so dark have been thrust upon me?—me, no fond child of fancy; me, sober pupil of schools the severest. Yet what marvel—the strangest my senses have witnessed or feigned in the fraud they have palmed on me—is greater than that by which a simple affection, that all men profess to have known, has changed the courses of life prearranged by my hopes and confirmed by my judgment? How calmly before I knew love I have anatomized its mechanism, as the tyro who dissects the webwork of tissues and nerves in the dead! Lo! it lives, lives in me; and, in living, escapes from my scalpel and mocks all my knowledge. Can love be reduced to the realm of the senses? No; what nun is more barred by her grate from the realm of the senses than my bride by her solemn affliction? Is love, then, the union of kindred, harmonious minds? No, my beloved one sits by my side, and I guess not her thoughts, and my mind is to her a sealed fountain. Yet I love her more—oh, ineffably more! for the doom which destroys the two causes philosophy assigns to love—in the form, in the mind! How can I now, in my vain physiology, say what is love—what is not? Is it love which must tell me that man has a soul, and that in soul will be found the solution of problems, never to be solved in body or mind alone?"

My self-questionings halted here as Lilian's hand touched my shoulder. She had risen from her seat, and had come to me.

"Are not the stars very far from earth?" she said.

"Very far."

"Are they seen for the first time to-night?"

"They were seen, I presume, as we see them, by the fathers of all human races!"

"Yet close below us they shine reflected in the waters; and yet, see, wave flows on wave before we can count it!"

"Lilian, by what sympathy do you read and answer my thought?"

Her reply was incoherent and meaningless. If a gleam of intelligence had mysteriously lighted my heart to her view, it was gone. But drawing her nearer towards me, my eye long followed wistfully the path of light, dividing the darkness on either hand, till it closed in the sloping horizon.

CHAPTER LXX.

THE voyage is over. At the seaport at which we landed I found a letter from Faber. My instructions had reached him in time to effect the purchase on which his descriptions had fixed my desire. The stock, the implements of husbandry, the furniture of the house, were included in the purchase. All was prepared for my arrival, and I hastened from the then miserable village, which may some day rise into one of the mightiest capitals of the world, to my lodge in the wilderness.

It was the burst of the Australian spring, which commences in our autumn month of October. The air was loaded with the perfume of the acacias. Amidst the glades of the open forest land, or climbing the craggy banks of winding silvery creeks,* creepers and flowers of dazzling hue contrasted the olive-green of the surrounding foliage. The exhilarating effect of the climate in that season heightens the charm of the strange scenery. In the brilliancy of the sky, in the lights of the atmosphere, the sense of life is wondrously quickened. With the very breath the Adventurer draws in from the racy air, he feels as if inhaling hope.

We have reached our home; we are settled in it; the early unfamiliar impressions are worn away. We have learned to dispense with much that we at first missed, and are reconciled to much that at first disappointed or displeased.

The house is built but of logs—the late proprietor had commenced, upon a rising ground, a mile distant, a more imposing edifice of stone; but it is not half-finished.

This log-house is commodious, and much has been done, within and without, to conceal or adorn its primitive rudeness.

* Creek is the name given by Australian colonists to precarious watercourses and tributary streams.

It is of irregular, picturesque form, with verandahs round three sides of it, to which the grape-vine has been trained, with glossy leaves that clamber up to the gabled roof. There is a large garden in front, in which many English fruit-trees have been set, and grow fast amongst the plants of the tropics and the orange-trees of Southern Europe. Beyond, stretch undulous pastures, studded not only with sheep, but with herds of cattle, which my speculative predecessor had bred from parents of famous stock, and imported from England at mighty cost; but as yet the herds had been of little profit, and they range their luxuriant expanse of pasture with as little heed. To the left, soar up, in long range, the many-colored hills; to the right meanders a creek, belted by feathery trees; and on its opposite bank a forest opens, through frequent breaks, into park-like glades and alleys. The territory, of which I so suddenly find myself the lord, is vast, even for a colonial capitalist.

It had been originally purchased as a "special survey," comprising twenty thousand acres, with the privilege of pasture over forty thousand more. In very little of this land, though it includes some of the most fertile districts in the known world, has cultivation been even commenced. At the time I entered into possession even sheep were barely profitable; labor was scarce and costly. Regarded as a speculation, I could not wonder that my predecessor fled in fear from his domain. Had I invested the bulk of my capital in this lordly purchase, I should have deemed myself a ruined man; but a villa near London, with a hundred acres, would have cost me as much to buy, and thrice as much to keep up. I could afford the investment I had made. I found a Scotch bailiff already on the estate, and I was contented to escape from rural occupations, to which I brought no experience, by making it worth his while to serve me with zeal. Two domestics of my own, and two who had been for many years with Mrs. Ashleigh, had accompanied us: they remained faithful and seemed contented. So the clockwork of our mere household arrangements went on much the same as in our native home. Lilian was not subjected to the ordinary privations and discomforts that await the wife even of the wealthy emigrant. Alas! would she have heeded them if she had been?

The change of scene wrought a decided change for the better in her health and spirits, but not such as implied a dawn of reviving reason. But her countenance was now more rarely overcast. Its usual aspect was glad with a soft, mysterious smile. She would murmur snatches of songs, that were partly

borrowed from English poets, and partly glided away into what seemed spontaneous additions of her own—wanting intelligible meaning, but never melody nor rhyme. Strange, that memory and imitation—the two earliest parents of all inventive knowledge—should still be so active, and judgment—the after faculty, that combines the rest into purpose and method—be annulled!

Julius Faber I see continually, though his residence is a few miles distant. He is sanguine as to Lilian's ultimate recovery; and, to my amazement and to my envy, he has contrived, by some art which I cannot attain, to establish between her and himself intelligible communion. She comprehends his questions, when mine, though the simplest, seem to her in unknown language; and he construes into sense her words, that to me are meaningless riddles.

"I was right," he said to me one day, leaving her seated in the garden beside her quiet, patient mother, and joining me where I lay, listless yet fretful, under the shadeless gum-trees, gazing not on the flocks and fields that I could call my own, but on the far mountain range, from which the arch of the horizon seemed to spring—"I was right," said the great physician; "this is reason suspended, not reason lost. Your wife will recover; but—"

"But what? "

"Give me your arm as I walk homeward, and I will tell you the conclusion to which I have come."

I rose, the old man leant on me, and we went down the valley, along the craggy ridges of the winding creek. The woodland on the opposite bank was vocal with the chirp, and croak, and chatter of Australian birds—all mirthful, all songless, save that sweetest of warblers, which some early irreverent emigrant degraded to the name of magpie, but whose note is sweeter than the nightingale's, and trills through the lucent air with a distinct ecstatic melody of joy that dominates all the discords—so ravishing the sense, that, while it sings, the ear scarcely heeds the scream of the parrots.

CHAPTER LXXI.

"You may remember," said Julius Faber, "Sir Humphrey Davy's eloquent description of the effect produced on him by the inhalation of nitrous oxide. He states that he began to lose the perception of external things: trains of vivid visible images rapidly passed through his mind, and were connected

with words in such a manner as to produce perceptions perfectly novel. 'I existed,' he says, 'in a world of newly connected and newly modified ideas.' When he recovered, he exclaimed: 'Nothing exists but thoughts; the universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains!'

"Now observe, that thus a cultivator of positive science, endowed with one of the healthiest of human brains, is by the inhalation of a gas abstracted from all external life—enters into a new world, which consists of images he himself creates, and animates so vividly, that, on waking, he resolves the universe itself into thoughts."

"Well," said I, "but what inference do you draw from that voluntary experiment, applicable to the malady of which you bid me hope the cure?"

"Simply this: that the effect produced on a healthful brain by the nitrous oxide may be produced also by moral causes operating on the blood, or on the nerves. There is a degree of mental excitement in which ideas are more vivid than sensations, and then the world of external things gives way to the world within the brain.* But this, though a suspension of that reason which comprehends accuracy of judgment, is no more a permanent aberration of reason than were Sir Humphry Davy's visionary ecstasies under the influence of the gas. The difference between the two states of suspension is that of time, and it is but an affair of time with our beloved patient. Yet prepare yourself. I fear that the mind will not recover without some critical malady of the body!"

"Critical! but not dangerous?—say not dangerous. I can endure the pause of her reason; I could not endure the void in the universe if her life were to fade from the earth."

"Poor friend! would not you yourself rather lose life than reason?"

"I—yes! But we men are taught to set cheap value on our own lives; we do not estimate at the same rate the lives of those we love. Did we do so, Humanity would lose its virtues."

"What, then! Love teaches that there is something of nobler value than mere mind? Yet surely it cannot be the mere body? What is it, if not that continuance of being which your philosophy declines to acknowledge, viz., SOUL? If you fear so painfully that your Lilian should die, is it not that you fear to lose her forever?"

* See, on the theory elaborated from this principle, Dr. Hibbert's interesting and valuable work on the Philosophy of Apparitions.

"Oh, cease, cease!" I cried impatiently. "I cannot now argue on metaphysics. What is it that you anticipate of harm to her life? Her health has been stronger ever since her affliction. She never seems to know ailment now. Do you not perceive that her cheek has a more hardy bloom, her frame a more rounded symmetry, than when you saw her in England?"

"Unquestionably. Her physical forces have been silently recruiting themselves in the dreams which half-lull, half-amuse her imagination. IMAGINATION! that faculty, the most glorious which is bestowed on the human mind, because it is the faculty which enables thought to create, is of all others the most exhausting to life when unduly stimulated, and consciously reasoning on its own creations. I think it probable that, had this sorrow not befallen you, you would have known a sorrow yet graver,—you would have long survived your Lilian. As it is now, when she recovers, her whole organization, physical and mental, will have undergone a beneficent change. But, I repeat my prediction: some severe malady of the body will precede the restoration of the mind; and it is my hope that the present suspense or aberration of the more wearing powers of the mind may fit the body to endure and surmount the physical crisis. I remember a case, within my own professional experience, in many respects similar to this, but in other respects it was less hopeful. I was consulted by a young student of a very delicate physical frame, of great mental energies, and consumed by an intense ambition. He was reading for university honors. He would not listen to me when I entreated him to rest his mind. I thought that he was certain to obtain the distinction for which he toiled, and equally certain to die a few months after obtaining it. He falsified both my prognostics. He so overworked himself that, on the day of examination, his nerves were agitated, his memory failed him; he passed, not without a certain credit, but fell far short of the rank amongst his fellow-competitors to which he aspired. Here, then, the irritated mind acted on the disappointed heart, and raised a new train of emotions. He was first visited by spectral illusions; then he sank to a state in which the external world seemed quite blotted out. He heeded nothing that was said to him; seemed to see nothing that was placed before his eyes; in a word, sensations became dormant, ideas preconceived usurped their place, and those ideas gave him pleasure. He believed that his genius was recognized, and lived amongst its supposed creations enjoying an imaginary fame. So it went on for two years; during which suspense of his reason, his frail form be-

came robust and vigorous. At the end of that time he was seized with a fever, which would have swept him in three days to the grave had it occurred when I was first called in to attend him. He conquered the fever, and in recovering, acquired the full possession of the intellectual faculties so long suspended. When I last saw him, many years afterwards, he was in perfect health, and the object of his young ambition was realized; the body had supported the mind—he had achieved distinction. Now, what had so, for a time, laid this strong intellect into visionary sleep? The most agonizing of human emotions in a noble spirit—shame! What has so stricken down your Lilian? You have told me the story: shame!—the shame of a nature pre-eminently pure. But observe that, in his case as in hers, the shock inflicted does not produce a succession of painful illusions: on the contrary, in both, the illusions are generally pleasing. Had the illusions been painful, the body would have suffered, the patient died. Why did a painful shock produce pleasing illusions? Because, no matter how a shock on the nerves may originate, if it affects the reason, it does but make more vivid, than impressions from actual external objects, the ideas previously most cherished. Such ideas in the young student were ideas of earthly fame; such ideas in the young maiden are ideas of angel comforters and heavenly Edens. You miss her mind on the earth, and, while we speak, it is in paradise."

"Much that you say, my friend, is authorized by the speculations of great writers, with whom I am not unfamiliar; but in none of those writers, nor in your encouraging words, do I find a solution for much that has no precedents in my experience—much, indeed, that has analogies in my reading, but analogies which I have hitherto despised as old wives' fables. I have bared to your searching eye the weird mysteries of my life. How do you account for facts which you cannot resolve into illusions? For the influence which that strange being, Margrave, exercised over Lilian's mind or fancy, so that for a time her love for me was as dormant as is her reason now; so that he could draw her—her whose nature you admit to be singularly pure and modest—from her mother's home. The magic wand! The trance into which that wand threw Margrave himself; the apparition which it conjured up in my own quiet chamber, when my mind was without a care and my health without a flaw. How account for all this—as you endeavored, and perhaps successfully, to account for all my impressions of the Vision in the Museum, of the luminous, haunting shadow

in its earlier apparitions, when my fancy was heated, my heart tormented, and, it might be, even the physical forces of this strong frame disordered?"

"Allen," said the old pathologist, "here we approach a ground which few physicians have dared to examine. Honor to those who, like our bold contemporary Elliotson have braved scoff and sacrificed dross in seeking to extract what is practical in uses, what can be tested by experiment, from those exceptional phenomena on which magic sought to found a philosophy, and to which philosophy tracks the origin of magic."

"What! Do I understand you? Is it you, Julius Faber, who attach faith to the wonders attributed to animal magnetism and electro-biology, or subscribe to the doctrines which their practitioners teach?"

"I have not examined into those doctrines, nor seen with my own eyes the wonders recorded, upon evidence too respectable, nevertheless, to permit me peremptorily to deny what I have not witnessed.* But wherever I look through the History of Mankind in all ages and all races, I find a concurrence in certain beliefs which seems to countenance the theory that there is in some peculiar and rare temperaments a power over forms

* What Faber here says is expressed with more authority by one of the most accomplished metaphysicians of our time (Sir W. Hamilton):

"Somnambulism is a phenomenon still more astonishing (than dreaming). In this singular state a person performs a regular series of rational actions, and those frequently of the most difficult and delicate nature; and what is still more marvellous, with a talent to which he could make no pretension when awake. (Cr. Ancilon, Essais Philos. ii. 161.) His memory and reminiscence supply him with recollections of words and things which, perhaps, never were at his disposal in the ordinary state; he speaks more fluently a more refined language. And if we are to credit what the evidence on which it rests hardly allows us to disbelieve, he has not only perception of things through other channels than the common organs of sense, but the sphere of his cognition is amplified to an extent far beyond the limits to which sensible perception is confined. This subject is one of the most perplexing in the whole compass of philosophy; for, on the one hand, the phenomena are so remarkable that they cannot be believed, and yet, on the other, they are of so unambiguous and palpable a character, and the witnesses to their reality are so numerous, so intelligent, and so high above every suspicion of deceit, that it is equally impossible to deny credit to what is attested by such ample and unexceptionable evidence."—Sir W. Hamilton's Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic, vol. ii. p. 274.

This perplexity, in which the distinguished philosopher leaves the judgment so equally balanced that it finds it impossible to believe, and yet impossible to disbelieve, forms the right state of mind in which a candid thinker should come to the examination of those more extraordinary phenomena which he has not himself yet witnessed, but the fair inquiry into which may be tendered to him by persons above the imputation of quackery and fraud. Müller, who is not the least determined, as he is certainly one of the most distinguished disbelievers of mesmeric phenomena, does not appear to have witnessed, or at least to have carefully examined, them, or he would, perhaps, have seen that even the more extraordinary of those phenomena confirm, rather than contradict, his own general theories, and may be explained by the sympathies one sense has with another—"the laws of reflexion through the medium of the brain." ("Physiology of Senses," p. 1311.) And again by the maxim "that the mental principle, or cause of the mental phenomena, cannot be confined to the brain, but that it exists in a latent state in every part of the organism." (Ib. p. 1355.) The "nerve power," contended for by Mr. Bain, also may suggest a rational solution of much that has seemed incredible to those physiologists who have not condescended to sift the genuine phenomena of mesmerism from the imposture to which, in all ages, the phenomena exhibited by what may be called the ecstatic temperament have been applied.

of animated organization, with which they establish some unaccountable affinity; and even, though much more rarely, a power over inanimate matter. You are familiar with the theory of Descartes, 'that those particles of the blood which penetrate to the brain do not only serve to nourish and sustain its substance, but to produce there a certain very subtle Aura, or rather a flame very vivid and pure that obtains the name of the Animal Spirits';* and at the close of his great fragment upon Man, he asserts that 'this flame is of no other nature than all the fires which are in inanimate bodies.'† This notion does but forestall the more recent doctrine that electricity is more or less in all, or nearly all, known matter. Now, whether in the electric fluid or some other fluid akin to it of which we know still less, thus equally pervading all matter, there may be a certain magnetic property more active, more operative upon sympathy in some human constitutions than in others, and which can account for the mysterious power I have spoken of, is a query I might suggest, but not an opinion I would hazard. For an opinion I must have that basis of experience or authority which I do not need when I submit a query to the experience and authority of others. Still the supposition conveyed in the query is so far worthy of notice, that the ecstatic temperament (in which phrase I comprehend all constitutional mystics) is peculiarly sensitive to electric atmospheric influences. This is a fact which most medical observers will have remarked in the range of their practice. Accordingly, I was prepared to find Mr. Hare Townshend, in his interesting work,‡ state that he himself was of 'the electric temperament,' sparks flying from his hair when combed in the dark, etc. That accomplished writer, whose veracity no one would impugn, affirms that 'between this electrical endowment and whatever mesmeric properties he might possess, there is a remarkable relationship and parallelism. Whatever state of the atmosphere tends to accumulate and insulate electricity in the body, promotes equally (says Mr. Townshend) the power and facility with which I influence others mesmerically. What Mr. Townshend thus observes in himself, American physicians and professors of chemistry depose to have observed in those modern magicians, the mediums of (so-called) 'spirit manifestation.' They state that all such mediums are of the electric temperament, thus everywhere found allied with the ecstatic, and their power varies in proportion as the state of the atmosphere serves to

* Descartes, "L'Homme," vol. iv. p. 345. Cousin's edition.
† Ibid., p. 428.
‡ "Facts in Mesmerism."

depress or augment the electricity stored in themselves. Here, then, in the midst of vagrant phenomena, either too hastily dismissed as altogether the tricks of fraudful imposture, or too credulously accepted as supernatural portent—here, at least, in one generalized fact, we may, perhaps, find a starting-point, from which inductive experiment may arrive, soon or late, at a rational theory. But, however the power of which we are speaking (a power accorded to special physical temperament) may or may not be accounted for by some patient student of nature, I am persuaded that it is in that power we are to seek for whatever is not wholly imposture, in the attributes assigned to magic or witchcraft. It is well said, by a writer who has gone into the depth of these subjects with the research of a scholar and the science of a pathologist, 'that if magic had exclusively reposed on credulity and falsehood its reign would never have endured so long. But that its art took its origin in singular phenomena, proper to certain affections of the nerves, or manifested in the conditions of sleep. These phenomena, the principle of which was at first unknown, served to root faith in magic, and often abused even enlightened minds. The enchanters and magicians arrived, by divers practices, at the faculty of provoking in other brains a determined order of dreams, of engendering hallucinations of all kinds, of inducing fits of hypnotism, trance, mania, during which the persons so affected imagined that they saw, heard, touched supernatural beings, conversed with them, proved their influences, assisted at prodigies of which magic proclaimed itself to possess the secret. The public, the enchanters, and the enchanted were equally dupes.' * Accepting this explanation, unintelligible to no physician of a practice so lengthened as mine has been, I draw from it the corollary, that as these phenomena are exhibited only by certain special affections, to which only certain special constitutions are susceptible, so not in any superior faculties of intellect, or of spiritual endowment, but in peculiar physical temperaments, often strangely disordered, the power of the sorcerer in affecting the imagination of others is to be sought. In the native tribes of Australasia the elders are instructed in the arts of this so-called sorcery, but only in a very few constitutions does instruction avail to produce effects in which the savages recognize the power of a sorcerer: it is so with the Obi of the negroes. The fascination of Obi is an unquestionable fact, but the Obi man cannot be trained by formal lessons: he is born a fascinator,

* "La Magie et l'Astrologie dans l'Antiquité et au Moyen-Age." Par L. F. Alfred Maury, Membre de l'Institut. P. 225.

as a poet is born a poet. It is so with the Laplanders, of whom Tornæus reports that of those instructed in the magical art 'only a few are capable of it.' 'Some' he says, 'are naturally magicians.' And this fact is emphatically insisted upon by the mystics of our own middle ages, who state that a man must be *born* a magician; in other words that the gift is constitutional, though developed by practice and art. Now, that this gift and its practice should principally obtain in imperfect states of civilization and fade into insignificance in the busy social enlightenment of cities, may be accounted for by reference to the known influences of imagination. In the cruder state of social life not only is imagination more frequently predominant over all other faculties, but it has not the healthful vents which the intellectual competition of cities and civilization affords. The man who in a savage tribe, or in the dark feudal ages, would be a magician is in our century a poet, an orator, a daring speculator, an inventive philosopher. In other words, his imagination is drawn to pursuits congenial to those amongst whom it works. It is the tendency of all intellect to follow the directions of the public opinion amidst which it is trained. Where a magician is held in reverence or awe, there will be more practitioners of magic than where a magician is despised as an impostor or shut up as a lunatic. In Scandinavia, before the introduction of Christianity, all tradition records the wonderful powers of the Vala, or witch, who was then held in reverence and honor. Christianity was introduced, and the early Church denounced the Vala as the instrument of Satan, and from that moment down dropped the majestic prophetess into a miserable and execrated old hag!"

"The ideas you broach," said I musingly, "have at moments crossed me, though I have shrunk from reducing them to a theory which is but one of pure hypothesis. But this magic, after all, then, you would place in the imagination of the operator, acting on the imagination of those whom it affects? Here at least, I can follow you, to a certain extent, for here we get back into the legitimate realm of physiology."

"And possibly," said Faber, "we may find hints to guide us to useful examination, if not to complete solution, of problems that, once demonstrated, may lead to discoveries of infinite value—hints, I say, in two writers of widely opposite genius, Van Helmont and Bacon. Van Helmont, of all the mediæval mystics, is in spite of his many extravagant whims the one whose intellect is the most suggestive to the disciplined reasoners of our day. He supposed that the faculty which he calls Phan-

tasy, and which we familiarly call Imagination, is invested with the power of creating for itself ideas independent of the senses, each idea clothed in a form fabricated by the imagination, and becoming an operative entity. This notion is so far favored by modern physiologists, that Lincke reports a case where the eye itself was extirpated; yet the extirpation was followed by the appearance of luminous figures before the orbit. And again, a woman stone-blind complained of 'luminous images, with pale colors, before her eyes.' Abercrombie mentions the case 'of a lady quite blind, her eyes being also disorganized and sunk, who never walked out without seeing a little old woman in a red cloak who seemed to walk before her.' * Your favorite authority, the illustrious Müller, who was himself in the habit of 'seeing different images in the field of vision when he lay quietly down to sleep, asserts that these images are not merely presented to the fancy, but that even the images of dreams *are really seen*,' and that 'any one may satisfy himself of this by accustoming himself regularly to open his eyes when waking after a dream—the images seen in the dream are then sometimes visible, and can be observed to disappear gradually.' He confirms this statement, not only by the result of his own experience, but by the observations made by Spinoza, and the yet higher authority of Aristotle, who accounts for spectral appearance as *the internal action of the sense of vision.* † And this opinion is favored by Sir David Brewster, whose experience leads him to suggest 'that the objects of mental contemplation may be seen as distinctly as external objects, and will occupy the same local position in the axis of vision as if they had been formed by the agency of light.' Be this as it may, one fact remains, that images can be seen even by the blind as distinctly and vividly as you and I now see the stream below our feet and the opossums at play upon yonder boughs. Let us come next to some remarkable suggestions of Lord Bacon. In his Natural History, treating of the force of the imagination, and the help it receives 'by one man working by another,' he cites an instance he had witnessed of a kind of juggler, who could tell a person what card he thought of. He mentioned this, 'to a pretended learned man, curious in such things,' and this sage said to him: 'It is not the knowledge of the man's thought,

* She had no illusions when within doors.—Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers, p. 277. (15th edition.)

† Müller, "Physiology of the Senses," Baley's translation, pp. 1068–1395, and elsewhere. Mr. Bain, in his thoughtful and suggestive work on the Senses and Intellect, makes very powerful use of these statements in support of his proposition, which Faber advances in other words, viz., "the return of the nervous currents exactly on their old track in revived sensations."

for that is proper to God, but the enforcing of a thought upon him, and binding his imagination by a stronger, so that he could think of no other card.' You see this sage anticipated our modern electro-biologists! And the learned man then shrewdly asked Lord Bacon: 'Did the juggler tell the card to the man himself who had thought of it, or bid another tell it?' 'He bade another tell it,' aswered Lord Bacon. 'I thought so,' returned his learned acquaintance, 'for the juggler himself could not have put on so strong an imagination; but by telling the card to the other, who believed the juggler was some strange man who could do strange things, that other man caught a strong imagination.' * The whole story is worth reading, because Lord Bacon evidently thinks it conveys a guess worth examining. . And Lord Bacon, were he now living, would be the man to solve the mysteries that branch out of mesmerism or (so-called) spiritual manifestation, for he would not pretend to despise their phenomena for fear of hurting his reputation for good sense. Bacon then goes on to state that there are three ways to fortify the imagination: 'First, authority derived from belief in an art and in the man who exercises it; secondly, means to quicken and corroborate the imagination; thirdly, means to repeat and refresh it.' For the second and the third he refers to the practices of magic, and proceeds afterwards to state on what things imagination has most force: 'upon things that have the lightest and easiest motions, and, therefore, above all, upon the spirits of men, and, in them, on such affections as move lightest—in love, in fear, in resolution. And,' adds Bacon, earnestly, in a different spirit from that which dictates to the sages of our time the philosophy of rejecting without trial that which belongs to the Marvellous, 'and whatsoever is of this kind, should be *thoroughly inquired into.*' And this great founder or renovator of the sober inductive system of investigation, even so far leaves it a matter of speculative inquiry, whether imagination may not be so powerful that it can actually operate upon a plant, that he says: 'This likewise should be made upon plants, and that diligently, as if you should tell a man that such a tree would die this year, and *will* him, at these and these times, to go unto it and see how it thriveth.' I presume

* Perhaps it is for the reason suggested in the text. viz., that the magician requires the interposition of a third imagination between his own and that of the consulting believer, and that any learned adept in (so-called) magic will invariably refuse to exhibit without the presence of a third person. Hence the author of "Dogme et Riteul de la Haute Magie," printed at Paris, 1852–53—a book less remarkable for its learning than for the earnest belief of a scholar of our own day in the reality of the art of which he records the history—insists much on the necessity of rigidly observing Le Ternaire, in the number of persons who assist in an enchanter's experiments.

that no philosopher has followed such recommendations: had some great philosopher done so, possibly we should by this time know all the secrets of what is popularly called witchcraft."

And as Faber here paused there came a strange laugh from the fantastic she-oak-tree overhanging the stream—a wild, impish laugh.

"Pooh! it is but the great kingfisher, the laughing-bird of the Australian bush," said Julius Faber, amused at my start of superstitious alarm.

We walked on for some minutes in musing silence, and the rude log-hut in which my wise companion had his home came in view—the flocks grazing on undulous pastures, the kine drinking at a watercourse fringed by the slender gum-trees, and a few fields, laboriously won from the luxuriant grass-land, rippling with the wave of corn.

I halted, and said: "Rest here for a few moments till I gather up the conclusions to which your speculative reasoning seems to invite me."

We sat down on a rocky crag, half-mantled by luxuriant creepers with vermilion buds.

"From the guesses," said I, "which you have drawn from the erudition of others and your own ingenious and reflective inductions, I collect this solution of the mysteries, by which the experience I gain from my senses confounds all the dogmas approved by my judgment. To the rational conjectures by which, when we first conversed on the marvels that perplexed me, you ascribed to my imagination, predisposed by mental excitement, physical fatigue or derangement, and a concurrence of singular events tending to strengthen such predisposition, the phantasmal impressions produced on my senses; to these conjectures you now add a new one, more startling and less admitted by sober physiologists. You conceive it possible that persons endowed with a rare and peculiar temperament can so operate on the imagination, and, through the imagination, on the senses of others, as to exceed even the powers ascribed to the practitioners of mesmerism and electro-biology, and give a certain foundation of truth to the old tales of magic and witchcraft. You imply that Margrave may be a person thus gifted, and hence the influence he unquestionably exercised over Lilian, and over, perhaps, less innocent agents, charmed or impelled by his will. And not discarding, as I own I should have been originally induced to do, the queries or suggestions adventured by Bacon in his discursive speculations on Nature, to wit 'that

there be many things, some of them inanimate, that operate upon the spirits of men by secret sympathy and antipathy,' and to which Bacon gave the quaint name of 'imaginants'; so even that wand, of which I have described to you the magic-like effects, may have had properties communicated to it by which it performs the work of the magician, as mesmerists pretend that some substance mesmerized by them can act on the patient as sensibly as if it were the mesmerizer himself. Do I state your suppositions correctly?"

"Yes; always remembering that they are only suppositions, and volunteered with the utmost diffidence. But since, thus seated in the early wilderness, we permit ourselves the indulgence of childlike guess, may it not be possible, apart from the doubtful question whether a man can communicate to an inanimate material substance a power to act upon the mind or imagination of another man—may it not, I say, be possible that such a substance may contain in itself such a virtue or property potent over certain constitutions, though not over all? For instance, it is in my experience that the common hazel-wood will strongly affect some nervous temperaments, though wholly without effect on others. I remember a young girl who, having taken up a hazel-stick freshly cut, could not relax her hold of it; and when it was wrenched away from her by force was irresistibly attracted towards it, repossessed herself of it, and, after holding it a few minutes, was cast into a kind of trance, in which she beheld phantasmal visions. Mentioning this curious case, which I supposed unique, to a learned brother of our profession, he told me that he had known other instances of the effect of the hazel upon nervous temperaments in persons of both sexes. Possibly it was some such peculiar property in the hazel that made it the wood selected for the old divining-rod. Again, we know that the bay-tree, or laurel, was dedicated to the oracular Pythian Apollo. Now wherever, in the world, we find that the learning of the priests enabled them to exhibit exceptional phenomena, which imposed upon popular credulity, there was a something or other which it is worth a philosopher's while to explore. And, accordingly, I always suspected that there was in the laurel some property favorable to ecstatic vision in highly impressionable temperaments. My suspicion, a few years ago, was justified by the experience of a German physician, who had under his care a cataleptic or ecstatic patient, and who assured me that he found nothing in this patient so stimulated the state of 'sleep-waking,' or so disposed that state to indulge in the hallucinations of prevision, as the

berry of the laurel.* Well, we do not know what this wand that produced a seemingly magical effect upon you was really composed of. You did not notice the metal employed in the wire which you say communicated a thrill to the sensitive nerves in the palm of the hand. You cannot tell how far it might have been the vehicle of some fluid force in nature. Or still more probably, whether the pores of your hand insensibly imbibed, and communicated to the brain, some of those powerful narcotics from which the Boudhists and the Arabs make unguents that induce visionary hallucinations, and in which substances undetected in the hollow of the wand, or the handle of the wand itself, might be steeped. † One thing we do know, viz., that amongst the ancients, and especially in the East, the construction of wands for magical purposes was no commonplace mechanical craft, but a special and secret art, appropriated to men who cultivated with assiduity all that was then known of natural science in order to extract from it agencies that might appear supernatural. Possibly, then, the rods or wands of the East, of which Scripture makes mention, were framed upon some principles of which we in our day are very naturally ignorant, since we do not ransack science for the same secrets. And thus, in the selection or preparation of the material employed mainly consisted whatever may be referable to natural philosophical causes, in the antique science of Rhabdomancy, or divination and enchantment by wands. The staff or wand of which you tell me, was, you say, made of iron or steel and tipped with crystal. Possibly iron and crystal do really contain some properties not hitherto scientifically analyzed, and only, indeed, potential over exceptional temperaments, which may account for the fact that iron and crystal have been favorites with all professed mystics, ancient and modern. The Delphic Pythoness had her iron tripod, Mesmer his iron bed; and many persons, indisputably honest, cannot gaze long upon a ball of crystal but what they begin to see visions. I suspect that a philosophical cause for such seemingly preternatural effects of crystal and iron will be found in connection with the extreme impressionability to changes in temperature which is the characteristic both of crystal and iron. But if these materials do contain certain powers over exceptional constitutions, we do not arrive at a supernatural, but at a natural phenomenon."

"Still," said I, "even granting that your explanatory hypo-

* I may add that Dr. Kerner instances the effect of laurel-berries on the Seeress of Prevorst, corresponding with that asserted by Julius Faber in the text.

† See for these unguents the work of M. Maury, before quoted, "La Magie et l'Astrologie," etc., p. 417.

theses hit or approach the truth—still what a terrible power you would assign to man's will over men's reason and deeds!"

"'Man's will,' answered Faber, 'has over men's deeds and reason, habitually and daily, power infinitely greater, and, when uncounterbalanced, infinitely more dangerous than that which superstition exaggerates in magic. Man's will moves a war that decimates a race, and leaves behind it calamities little less dire than slaughter. Man's will frames, but it also corrupts laws; exalts, but also demoralizes opinion; sets the world mad with fanaticism, as often as it curbs the heart's fierce instincts by the wisdom of brother-like mercy. You revolt at the exceptional, limited sway over some two or three individuals which the arts of a sorcerer (if sorcerer there be) can effect; and yet, at the very moment in which you were perplexed and appalled by such sway, or by your reluctant belief in it, your will was devising an engine to unsettle the reason and wither the hopes of millions!"

"My will! What engine?"

"A book conceived by your intellect, adorned by your learning, and directed by your will, to steal from the minds of other men their persuasion of the soul's everlasting Hereafter."

I bowed my head and felt myself grow pale.

"And if we accept Bacon's theory of 'secret sympathy,' or the plainer physiological maxim that there must be in the imagination, morbidly impressed by the will of another, some trains of idea in affinity with such influence and preinclined to receive it, no magician could warp you to evil, except through thoughts that themselves went astray. Grant that the Margrave who still haunts your mind did really, by some occult, sinister magnetism, guide the madman to murder, did influence the servant-woman's vulgar desire to pry into the secrets of her ill-fated master, or the old maid's covetous wish and envious malignity, what could this awful magician do more than any commonplace guilty adviser, to a mind predisposed to accept the advice?"

"You forget one example which destroys your argument, the spell which this mysterious fascinator could cast upon a creature so pure from all guilt as Lilian!"

"Will you forgive me if I answer frankly?"

"Speak."

"Your Lilian is spotless and pure as you deem her, and the fascination, therefore, attempts no lure through a sinful desire; it blends with its attraction no sentiment of affection untrue to yourself. Nay, it is justice to your Lilian, and may be a melan-

choly comfort to you, to state my conviction, based on the answers my questions have drawn from her, that you were never more cherished by her love than when that love seemed to forsake you. Her imagination impressed her with the illusion that through love for her you were threatened with a great peril. What seemed the levity of her desertion was the devotion of self-sacrifice. And, in her strange, dream-led wanderings, do not think that she was conscious of the fascination you impute to this mysterious Margrave; in her belief it was your own guardian angel that guided her steps, and her pilgrimage was ordained to disarm the foe that menaced you, and dissolve the spell that divided her life from yours! But had she not, long before this, wilfully prepared herself to be so deceived? Had not her fancies been deliberately encouraged to dwell remote from the duties we are placed on the earth to perform? The loftiest faculties in our nature are those that demand the finest poise, not to fall from their height and crush all the walls that they crown. With exquisite beauty of illustration, Hume says of the dreamers of 'bright fancies,' 'that they may be compared to those angels whom the Scriptures represent as covering their eyes with their wings.' Had you been, like my nephew, a wrestler for bread with the wilderness, what helpmate would your Lilian have been to you? How often would you have cried out in justifiable anger: 'I, son of Adam, am on earth, not in paradise? Oh, that my Eve were at home on my hearth, and not in the skies with the seraphs!' No Margrave, I venture to say, could have suspended the healthful affections, or charmed into danger, the wide-awake soul of my Amy. When she rocks in its cradle the babe the young parents intrust to her heed; when she calls the kine to the milking, the chicks to their corn; when she but flits through my room to renew the flowers on the stand, or range in neat order the books that I read—no spell on her fancy could lead her a step from the range of her provident cares! At day she is contented to be on the commonplace earth; at evening she and I knock together at the one door of heaven which opes to thanksgiving and prayer; and thanksgiving and prayer send us back, calm and hopeful, to the task that each morrow renews.''

I looked up as the old man paused, and in the limpid clearness of the Australian atmosphere, I saw the child he thus praised standing by the garden-gate, looking towards us, and though still distant, she seemed near. I felt wroth with her. My heart so cherished my harmless, defenceless Lilian, that I was jealous of the praise taken from her to be bestowed on another.

"Each of us," said I coldly, "has his or her own nature, and the uses harmonious to that nature's idiosyncrasy. The world, I grant, would get on very ill if women were not, more or less, actively useful and quietly good, like your Amy. But the world would lose standards that exalt and refine, if no woman were permitted to gain, through the indulgence of fancy, thoughts exquisite as those which my Lilian conceived, while thought, alas! flowed out of fancy. I do not wound you by citing your Amy as a type of the mediocre. I do not claim for Lilian the rank we accord to the type of genius. But both are alike to such types in this—viz., that the uses of mediocrity are for every-day life, and the uses of genius, amidst a thousand mistakes which mediocrity never commits, are to suggest and perpetuate ideas which raise the standard of the mediocre to a nobler level. There would be fewer Amys in life if there were no Lilian!—as there would be far fewer good men of sense if there were no erring dreamers of genius!"

"You say well, Allen Fenwick. And who should be so indulgent to the vagaries of the imagination as the philosophers who taught your youth to doubt everything in the Maker's plan of creation which could not be mathematically proved? 'The human mind,' said Luther, 'is like a drunkard on horseback: prop it on one side, and it falls on the other.' So the man who is much too enlightened to believe in a peasant's religion, is always sure to set up some inane superstition of his own. Open biographical volumes wherever you please, and the man who has no faith in religion is a man who has faith in a nightmare. See that type of the elegant sceptics—Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He is writing a book against Revelation; he asks a sign from heaven to tell him if his book is approved by his Maker, and the man who cannot believe in the miracles performed by his Saviour, gravely tells us of a miracle vouchsafed to himself. Take the hardest and strongest intellect which the hardest and strongest race of mankind ever schooled and accomplished. See the greatest of great men, the great Julius Cæsar! Publicly he asserts in the Senate that the immortality of the soul is a vain chimera. He professes the creed which Roman voluptuaries deduced from Epicurus, and denies all Divine interference in the affairs of the earth. A great authority for the Materialists—they have none greater! They can show on their side no intellect equal to Cæsar's! And yet this magnificent free-thinker, rejecting a soul and a Deity, habitually entered his chariot in muttering a charm; crawled on his knees up the steps of a temple to propitiate the abstraction called 'Nemesis,'

and did not cross the Rubicon till he had consulted the omens. What does all this prove? a very simple truth. Man has some instincts with the brutes; for instance, hunger and sexual love. Man has one instinct peculiar to himself, found universally (or with alleged exceptions in savage states so rare, that they do not affect the general law *)—an instinct of an invisible power without this earth, and of a life beyond the grave, which that power vouchsafes to his spirit. But the best of us cannot violate an instinct with impunity. Resist hunger as long as you can, and, rather than die of starvation, your instinct will make you a cannibal; resist love when youth and nature impel to it, and what pathologist does not track one broad path into madness or crime? So with the noblest instinct of all. Reject the internal conviction by which the grandest thinkers have sanctioned the hope of the humblest Christian, and you are servile at once to some faith inconceivably more hard to believe. The imagination will not be withheld from its yearnings for vistas beyond the walls of the flesh and the span of the present hour. Philosophy itself, in rejecting the healthful creeds by which man finds his safeguards in sober prayer, and his guide through the wilderness of visionary doubt, invents systems compared to which the mysteries of theology are simple. Suppose any man of strong, plain understanding had never heard of a Deity like Him whom we Christians adore, then ask this man which he can the better comprehend in his mind, and accept as a natural faith, viz., the simple Christianity of his shepherd or the Pantheism of Spinoza? Place before an accomplished critic (who comes with a perfectly unprejudiced mind to either inquiry), first, the arguments of David Hume against the Gospel miracles, and then the metaphysical crochets of David Hume himself. This subtle philosopher, not content, with Berkeley, to get rid of matter—not content, with Condillac, to get rid of spirit or mind—proceeds to a miracle greater than any his Maker has yet vouchsafed to reveal. He, being then alive and in the act of writing, gets rid of himself altogether. Nay, he confesses he cannot reason with any one who is stupid enough to think he has a self. His words are: 'What we call a mind is nothing

* It seems extremely doubtful whether the very few instances in which it has been asserted that a savage race has been found without recognition of a Deity and a future state would bear searching examination. It is set forth, for example, in most of the popular works on Australia, that the Australian savages have no notion of a Deity or a Hereafter, that they only worship a devil, or evil spirit. This assumption, though made more peremptorily, and by a greater number of writers than any similar one regarding other savages, is altogether erroneous, and has no other foundation than the ignorance of the writers. The Australian savages recognize a Deity, but He is too august for a name in their own language; in English they call Him The Great Master—an expression synonymous with "The Great Lord." They believe in a hereafter of eternal joy, and place it amongst the stars.—See Strzelecki's "Physical Description of New South Wales."

but a heap or collection of different perceptions or objects united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with perfect simplicity and identity. If any one, upon serious and candid reflection, thinks he has a different notion of himself, I must confess I can reason with him no longer.' Certainly I would rather believe all the ghost stories upon record, than believe that I am not even a ghost, distinct and apart from the perceptions conveyed to me, no matter how—just as I am distinct and apart from the furniture in my room, no matter whether I found it there or whether I bought it. If some old cosmogonist asked you to believe that the primitive cause of the solar system was not to be traced to a Divine Intelligence, but to a nebulosity, originally so diffused that its existence can with difficulty be conceived, and that the origin of the present system of organized beings equally dispensed with the agency of a creative mind, and could be referred to molecules formed in the water by the power of attraction, till by modifications of cellular tissue in the gradual lapse of ages, one monad became an oyster and another a Man—would you not say this cosmogony could scarcely have misled the human understanding even in the earliest dawn of speculative inquiry? Yet such are the hypotheses to which the desire to philosophize away that simple proposition of a Divine First Cause, which every child can comprehend, led two of the greatest geniuses and profoundest reasoners of modern times—La Place and La Marck.* Certainly the more you examine those arch phantasmagorists, the philosophers who would leave nothing in the universe but their own delusions, the more your intellectual pride may be humbled. The wildest phenomena which have startled you are not more extravagant than the grave explanations which intellectual presumption adventures on the elements of our organism and the relations between the world of matter and the world of ideas.''

Here our conversation stopped, for Amy had now joined us, and, looking up to reply, I saw the child's innocent face between me and the furrowed brow of the old man.

CHAPTER LXXII.

I TURNED back alone. The sun was reddening the summits of the distant mountain-range, but dark clouds, that portended rain, were gathering behind my way and deepening the shad-

* See the observations on La Place and La Marck in the Introduction to Kirby's Bridgewater Treatise.

ows in many a chasm and hollow which volcanic fires had wrought on the surface of uplands undulating like diluvian billows fixed into stone in the midst of their stormy swell. I wandered on and away from the beaten track, absorbed in thought. Could I acknowledge in Julius Faber's conjectures any basis for logical ratiocination? Or were they not the ingenious fancies of that empirical Philosophy of Sentiment by which the aged, in the decline of severer faculties, sometimes assimilate their theories to the hazy romance of youth? I can well conceive that the story I tell will be regarded by most as a wild and fantastic fable; that by some it may be considered a vehicle for guesses at various riddles of Nature, without or within us, which are free to the license of romance, though forbidden to the caution of science. But I—I—know unmistakably my own identity, my own positive place in a substantial universe. And beyond that knowledge, what do I know? Yet had Faber no ground for his startling parallels between the chimeras of superstition and the alternatives to faith volunteered by the metaphysical speculations of knowledge? On the theorems of Condillac, I, in common with numberless contemporaneous students (for, in my youth, Condillac held sway in the schools, as now, driven forth from the schools, his opinions float loose through the talk and the scribble of men of the world, who perhaps never opened his page)—on the theorems of Condillac I had built up a system of thought designed to immure the swathed form of material philosophy from all rays and all sounds of a world not material, as the walls of some blind mausoleum shut out, from the mummy within, the whisper of winds and the gleaming of stars.

And did not those very theorems, when carried out to their strict and completing results by the close reasonings of Hume, resolve my own living identity, the one conscious indivisible ME, into a bundle of memories derived from the senses which had bubbled and duped my experience, and reduce into a phantom, as spectral as that of the Luminous Shadow, the whole solid frame of creation?

While pondering these questions, the storm, whose forewarnings I had neglected to heed, burst forth with all the suddenness peculiar to the Australian climes. The rains descended like the rushing of floods. In the beds of watercourses, which at noon, seemed dried up and exhausted, the torrents began to swell and to rave; the gray crags around them were animated into living waterfalls. I looked round and the landscape was as changed as a scene that replaces a scene on the

player's stage. I was aware that I had wandered far from my home, and I knew not what direction I should take to regain it. Close at hand, and raised above the torrents that now rushed in many a gulley and tributary creek, around and before me, the mouth of a deep cave, overgrown with bushes and creeping flowers tossed wildly to and fro between the rain from above and the spray of cascades below, offered a shelter from the storm. I entered; scaring innumerable flocks of bats striking against me, blinded by the glare of the lightning that followed me into the cavern; and hastening to re-settle themselves on the pendants of stalactites, or the jagged buttresses of primæval wall.

From time to time lightning darted into the gloom and lingered amongst its shadows; and I saw, by the flash, that the floors on which I stood were strewed with strange bones, some amongst them the fossilized relics of races destroyed by the Deluge. The rain continued for more than two hours with unabated violence; then it ceased almost as suddenly as it had come on. And the lustrous moon of Australia burst from the clouds, shining, bright as an English dawn, into the hollows of the cave. And then simultaneously arose all the choral songs of the wilderness—creatures whose voices are heard at night—the loud whirr of the locusts, the musical boom of the bullfrog, the cuckoo note of the morepork, and, mournful amidst all those merrier sounds, the hoot of the owl, through the wizard she-oaks and the pale green of the gum-trees.

I stepped forth into the open air and gazed, first instinctively, on the heavens, next, with more heedful eye, upon the earth. The nature of the soil bore the evidence of volcanic fires long since extinguished. Just before my feet, the rays fell full upon a bright yellow streak in the block of quartz half embedded in the soft moist soil. In the midst of all the solemn thoughts and the intense sorrows which weighed upon heart and mind, that yellow gleam startled the mind into a direction remote from philosophy, quickened the heart to a beat that chimed with no household affections. Involuntarily I stooped; impulsively I struck the block with the hatchet, or tomahawk, I carried habitually about me, for the purpose of marking the trees that I wished to clear from the waste of my broad domain. The quartz was shattered by the stroke, and left disburied its glittering treasure. My first glance had not deceived me. I, vain seeker after knowledge, had, at least, discovered gold. I took up the bright metal—gold! I paused; I looked round; the land that just before had seemed to me so

worthless, took the value of Ophir. Its features had before been as unknown to me as the Mountains of the Moon, and now my memory became wonderfully quickened. I recalled the rough map of my possessions, the first careless ride round their boundaries. Yes, the land on which I stood—for miles, to the spur of those farther mountains—the land was mine, and, beneath its surface, there was gold! I closed my eyes; for some moments, visions of boundless wealth, and of the royal power which such wealth could command, swept athwart my brain. But my heart rapidly settled back to its real treasure. "What matters," I sighed, "all this dross? Could Ophir itself buy back to my Lilian's smile one ray of the light which gave 'glory to the grass and splendor to the flower'?"

So muttering, I flung the gold into the torrent that raged below, and went on through the moonlight, sorrowing silently—only thankful for the discovery that had quickened my reminiscence of the landmarks by which to steer my way through the wilderness.

The night was half gone, for even when I had gained the familiar track through the pastures, the swell of the many winding creeks that now intersected the way obliged me often to retrace my steps; to find, sometimes, the bridge of a felled tree which had been providently left unremoved over the now foaming torrent, and, more than once, to swim across the current, in which swimmers less strong or less practised would have been dashed down the falls, where loose logs and torn trees went clattering and whirled: for I was in danger of life. A band of the savage natives were stealthily creeping on my track—the natives in those parts were not then so much awed by the white man as now. A boomerang * had whirred by me, burying itself amongst the herbage close before my feet. I had turned, sought to find and to face these dastardly foes; they contrived to elude me. But when I moved on, my ear, sharpened by danger, heard them moving, too, in my rear. Once only three hideous forms suddenly faced me, springing up from a thicket, all tangled with honeysuckles and creepers of blue and vermilion. I walked steadily up to them; they halted a moment or so in suspense, but perhaps they were scared by my stature or awed by my aspect; and the Unfamiliar, though Human, had terror for them, as the Unfamiliar, although but a Shadow, had had terror for me. They vanished, and as quickly as if they had crept into the earth.

At length the air brought me the soft perfume of my well-

* A missile weapon peculiar to the Australian savages.

known acacias, and my house stood before me, amidst English flowers and English fruit-trees, under the effulgent Australian moon. Just as I was opening the little gate which gave access from the pasture-land into the garden, a figure in white rose up from under light, feathery boughs, and a hand was laid on my arm. I started; but my surprise was changed into fear when I saw the pale face and sweet eyes of Lilian.

"Heavens! you here! you! at this hour! Lilian, what is this?"

"Hush!" she whispered, clinging to me; "Hush! do not tell: no one knows. I missed you when the storm came on; I have missed you ever since. Others went in search of you and came back. I could not sleep, but the rest are sleeping, so I stole down to watch for you. Brother, brother, if any harm chanced to you, even the angels could not comfort me; all would be dark, dark! But you are safe, safe, safe!" And she clung to me yet closer.

"Ah! Lilian, Lilian, your vision in the hour I first beheld you was indeed prophetic—'Each has need of the other.' Do you remember?"

"Softly, softly," she said, "let me think!" She stood quietly by my side, looking up into the sky, with all its numberless stars, and its solitary moon now sinking slow behind the verge of the forest. "It comes back to me," she murmured softly—"the Long ago—the sweet Long ago!"

I held my breath to listen.

"There—there!" she resumed, pointing to the heavens; "Do you see? You are there, and my father, and—and—Oh! that terrible face—those serpent eyes—the dead man's skull! Save me—save me!"

She bowed her head upon my bosom, and I led her gently back towards the house. As we gained the door which she had left open, the starlight shining across the shadowy gloom within, she lifted her face from my breast, and cast a hurried, fearful look round the shining garden, then into the dim recess beyond the threshold.

"It is there—there!—the Shadow that lured me on, whispering that if I followed it I should join my beloved. False, dreadful Shadow! it will fade soon—fade into the grinning, horrible skull. Brother, brother, where is my Allen? Is he dead—dead—or is it I who am dead to him?"

I could but clasp her again to my breast, and seek to mantle her shivering form with my dripping garments, all the while my eyes—following the direction which hers had taken—dwelt

on the walls of the nook within the threshold, half-lost in darkness, half-white in starlight. And there I, too, beheld the haunting Luminous Shadow, the spectral effigies of the mysterious being whose very existence in the flesh was a riddle unsolved by my reason. Distinctly I saw the Shadow, but its light was far paler, its outline far more vague, than when I had beheld it before. I took courage as I felt Lilian's heart beating against my own. I advanced, I crossed the threshold—the Shadow was gone.

"There is no Shadow here—no phantom to daunt thee, my life's life," said I, bending over Lilian.

"It has touched me in passing; I feel it—cold, cold, cold!" she answered faintly.

I bore her to her room, placed her on her bed, struck a light, watched over her. At dawn there was a change in her face, and from that time health gradually left her; strength slowly, slowly, yet to me perceptibly, ebbed from her life away.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Months upon months have rolled on since the night in which Lilian had watched for my coming amidst the chilling airs under the haunting moon. I have said that from the date of that night her health began gradually to fail, but in her mind there was evidently at work some slow revolution. Her visionary abstractions were less frequent; when they occurred, less prolonged. There was no longer in her soft face that celestial serenity which spoke her content in her dreams, but often a look of anxiety and trouble. She was even more silent than before; but when she did speak, there were now evident some struggling gleams of memory. She startled us, at times, by a distinct allusion to the events and scenes of her early childhood. More than once she spoke of commonplace incidents and mere acquaintances at L——. At last she seemed to recognize Mrs. Ashleigh as her mother; but me, as Allen Fenwick, her betrothed, her bridegroom, no! Once or twice she spoke to me of her beloved as of a stranger to myself, and asked me not to deceive her—should she ever see him again? There was one change in this new phase of her state that wounded me to the quick. She had always previously seemed to welcome my presence; now there were hours, sometimes days together, in which my presence was evidently painful to her. She would become agitated when I stole into her room—

make signs to me to leave her—grow yet more disturbed if I did not immediately obey, and become calm again when I was gone.

Faber sought constantly to sustain my courage and administered to my hopes by reminding me of the prediction he had hazarded, viz., that through some malady to the frame the reason would be ultimately restored.

He said: "Observe! her mind was first roused from its slumber by the affectionate, unconquered impulse of her heart. You were absent—the storm alarmed her—she missed you—feared for you. The love within her, not alienated, though latent, drew her thoughts into definite human tracks. And thus, the words that you tell me she uttered when you appeared before her were words of love, stricken, though as yet irregularly, as the winds strike the harp-strings, from chords of awakened memory. The same unwonted excitement, together with lengthened exposure to the cold night-air, will account for the shock to her physical system, and the languor and waste of strength by which it has been succeeded."

"Ay, and the Shadow that we *both* saw within the threshold. What of that?"

"Are there no records on evidence, which most physicians of very extended practice will perhaps allow that their experience more or less tends to confirm—no records of the singular coincidences between individual impressions which are produced by sympathy? Now, whether you or your Lilian were first haunted by this Shadow I know not. Perhaps before it appeared to you in the wizard's chamber, it had appeared to her by the Monks' Well. Perhaps, as it came to you in the prison, so it lured her through the solitudes, associating its illusory guidance with dreams of you. And again, when she saw it within your threshold, your phantasy, so abruptly invoked, made you see with the eyes of your Lilian! Does this doctrine of sympathy, though by that very mystery you two loved each other at first—though, without it, love at first sight were in itself an incredible miracle—does, I say, this doctrine of sympathy seem to you inadmissible? Then nothing is left for us but to revolve the conjecture I before threw out. Have certain organizations like that of Margrave the power to impress, through space, the imaginations of those over whom they have forced a control? I know not. But if they have, it is not supernatural; it is but one of those operations in Nature so rare and exceptional, and of which testimony and evidence are so imperfect and so liable to superstitious illusions, that

they have not yet been traced—as, if truthful, no doubt they can be by the patient genius of science—to one of those secondary causes by which the Creator ordains that Nature shall act on Man."

By degrees I became dissatisfied with my conversations with Faber. I yearned for explanations; all guesses but bewildered me more. In his family, with one exception, I found no congenial association. His nephew seemed to me an ordinary specimen of a very trite human nature—a young man of limited ideas, fair moral tendencies, going mechanically right where not tempted to wrong. The same desire of gain which had urged him to gamble and speculate when thrown in societies rife with such example, led him, now, in the Bush, to healthful, industrious, persevering labor. *Spes fovet agricolas*, says the poet; the same Hope which entices the fish to the hook, impels the plough of the husbandman. The young farmer's young wife was somewhat superior to him; she had more refinement of taste, more culture of mind, but, living in his life, she was inevitably levelled to his ends and pursuits. And, next to the babe in the cradle, no object seemed to her so important as that of guarding the sheep from the scab and the dingoes. I was amazed to see how quietly a man whose mind was so stored by life and by books as that of Julius Faber—a man who had loved the clash of conflicting intellects, and acquired the rewards of fame—could accommodate himself to the cabined range of his kinsfolks' half-civilized existence, take interest in their trivial talk, find varying excitement in the monotonous household of a peasant-like farmer. I could not help saying as much to him once. "My friend," replied the old man, "believe me that the happiest art of intellect, however lofty, is that which enables it to be cheerfully at home with the Real!"

The only one of the family in which Faber was domesticated in whom I found an interest, to whose talk I could listen without fatigue, was the child Amy. Simple though she was in language, patient of labor as the most laborious, I recognized in her a quiet nobleness of sentiment, which exalted above the commonplace the acts of her commonplace life. She had no precocious intellect, no enthusiastic fancies, but she had an exquisite activity of heart. It was her heart that animated her sense of duty, and made duty a sweetness and a joy. She felt to the core the kindness of those around her; exaggerated, with the warmth of her gratitude, the claims which that kindness imposed. Even for the blessing of life, which she shared

with all creation, she felt as if singled out by the undeserved favor of the Creator, and thus was filled with religion because she was filled with love.

My interest in this child was increased and deepened by my saddened and not wholly unremorseful remembrance of the night on which her sobs had pierced my ear—the night from which I secretly dated the mysterious agencies that had wrenched from their proper field and career both my mind and my life. But a gentler interest endeared her to my thoughts in the pleasure that Lilian felt in her visits, in the affectionate intercourse that sprang up between the afflicted sufferer and the harmless infant. Often when we failed to comprehend some meaning which Lilian evidently wished to convey to us—*we*, her mother and her husband—she was understood with as much ease by Amy, the unlettered child, as by Faber, the gray-haired thinker.

"How is it—how is it?" I asked, impatiently and jealously, of Faber. "Love is said to interpret where wisdom fails, and you, yourself, talk of the marvels which sympathy may effect between lover and beloved; yet when, for days together, I cannot succeed in unravelling Lilian's wish or her thought—and her own mother is equally in fault—you or Amy, closeted alone with her for five minutes, comprehend and are comprehended."

"Allen," answered Faber, "Amy and I believe in spirit, and she, in whom mind is dormant but spirit awake, feels in such belief a sympathy which she has not, in that respect, with yourself nor even with her mother. You seek only through your mind to conjecture hers. Her mother has sense clear enough where habitual experience can guide it, but that sense is confused, and forsakes her when forced from the regular pathway in which it has been accustomed to tread. Amy and I through soul guess at soul, and though mostly contented with earth, we can both rise at times into heaven. We pray."

"Alas!" said I, half-mournfully, half-angrily; "when you thus speak of Mind as distinct from Soul, it was only in that Vision which you bid me regard as the illusion of a fancy stimulated by chemical vapors, producing on the brain an effect similar to that of opium or the inhalation of the oxide gas, that I have ever seen the silver spark of the Soul, distinct from the light of the Mind. And holding, as I do, that all intellectual ideas are derived from the experiences of the body, whether I accept the theory of Locke, or that of Condillac, or that into which their propositions reach their final development in the

wonderful subtlety of Hume, I cannot detect the immaterial spirit in the material substance, much less follow its escape from the organic matter in which the principle of thought ceases with the principle of life. When the metaphysician, contending for the immortality of the thinking faculty, analyzes Mind, his analysis comprehends the mind of the brute, nay, of the insect, as well as that of man. Take Reid's definition of Mind, as the most comprehensive which I can at the moment remember: 'By the mind of a man we understand that in him which thinks, remembers, reasons, and wills.' But this definition only distinguishes the mind of man from that of the brute by superiority in the same attributes, and not by attributes denied to the brute. An animal, even an insect, thinks, remembers, reasons, and wills.* Few naturalists will now support the doctrine that all the mental operations of brute or insect are to be exclusively referred to instincts; and, even if they do, the word instinct is a very vague word—loose and large enough to cover an abyss which our knowledge has not sounded. And, indeed, in proportion as an animal, like the dog, becomes cultivated by intercourse, his instincts grow weaker, and his ideas formed by experience (viz., his mind) more developed, often to the conquest of the instincts themselves. Hence, with his usual candor, Dr. Abercrombie, in contending 'that everything mental ceases to exist after death, when we know that everything corporeal continues to exist, is a gratuitous assumption contrary to every rule of philosophical inquiry,' feels compelled, by his reasoning, to admit the probability of a future life even to the lower animals. His words are: 'To this mode of reasoning it has been objected that it would go to establish an immaterial principle in the lower animals, which in them exhibits many of the phenomena of mind. I have only to answer, Be it so. There are in the lower animals many of the phenomena of mind, and with regard to these, we also contend that they are entirely distinct from anything we know of the properties of matter, which is all that we

* "Are intelligence and instinct, thus differing in their relative proportion in man as compared with all other animals, yet the same in kind and manner of operation in both? To this question we must give at once an affirmative answer. The expression of Cuvier, regarding the faculty of reasoning in lower animals, 'Leur intelligence exécute des opérations du même genre,' is true in its full sense. We can in no manner define reason so as to exclude acts which are at every moment present to our observation, and which we find in many instances to contravene the natural instincts of the species. The demeanor and acts of the dog in reference to his master, or the various uses to which he is put by man, are as strictly logical as those we witness in the ordinary transactions of life."—(Sir Henry Holland, chapters on Mental Physiology, p. 220.) The whole of the chapter on Instincts and Habits in this work should be read in connection with the passage just quoted. The work itself, at once cautious and suggestive, is not one of the least obligations which philosophy and religion alike owe to the lucubrations of English medical men.

mean, or can mean, by being immaterial.'* Am I then driven to admit that if man's mind is immaterial and imperishable, so also is that of the ape and the ant?"

"I own," said Faber, with his peculiar smile, arch and genial, 'that if I were compelled to make that admission, it would not shock my pride. I do not presume to set any limit to the goodness of the Creator; and should be as humbly pleased as the Indian, if in

' yonder sky,
My faithful dog should bear me company.'

You are too familair with the works of that Titan in wisdom and error, Descartes, not to recollect the interesting correspondence between the urbane philosopher and our combative countryman, Henry More,† on this very subject; in which certainly More has the best of it when Descartes insists on reducing what he calls the soul (*l'âme*) of brutes into the same kind of machines as man constructs from inorganized matter. The learning, indeed, lavished on the insoluble question involved in the psychology of the inferior animals, is a proof at least of the all-inquisitive, redundant spirit of man.‡ We have almost a literature in itself devoted to endeavors to interpret the language of brutes.§ Dupont de Nemours has discovered that dogs talk in vowels, using only two consonants, G, Z, when they are angry. He asserts that cats employ the same vowels as dogs; but their language is more affluent in consonants, including M, N, B, R, V, F. How many laborious efforts have been made to define and to construe the song of the nightingale! One version of that song by Beckstein, the naturalist, published in 1840, I remember to have seen. And I heard a lady, gifted with a singularly charming voice, chant the mysterious vowels with so exquisite a pathos, that one could not refuse to believe her when she declared that she fully comprehended the bird's meaning, and gave to the nightingale's warble the tender interpretation of her own woman's heart.

"But leaving all such discussions to their proper place

* Abercrombie's "Intellectual Powers," p. 26. Fifteenth edition.

† Œuvres de Descartes, vol. x. p. 178, et seq. (Cousin's edition.)

‡ M. Tissot, the distinguished Professor of Philosophy at Dijon, in his recent work, "La Vie dans l'Homme," p. 255, gives a long and illustrious list of philosophers who assign a rational soul (*âme*) to the inferior animals, though he truly adds, "that they have not always the courage of their opinion."

§ Some idea of the extent of research and imagination bestowed on this subject may be gleaned from the sprightly work of Pierquin de Gemblouz, "Idiomologie des Animaux," published at Paris, 1844.

amongst the Curiosities of Literature, I come in earnest to the question you have so earnestly raised; and to me the distinction between man and the lower animals in reference to a spiritual nature designed for a future existence, and the mental operations whose uses are bounded to an existence on earth, seems ineffaceably clear. Whether ideas or even perceptions be innate or all formed by experience is a speculation for metaphysicians, which, so far as it affects the question of an immaterial principle, I am quite willing to lay aside. I can well understand that a materialist may admit innate ideas in Man, as he must admit them in the instinct of brutes, tracing them to hereditary predispositions. On the other hand, we know that the most devout believers in our spiritual nature have insisted, with Locke, in denying any idea, even of the Deity, to be innate.

"But here comes my argument. I care not how ideas are formed, the material point is, how are the *capacities to receive ideas formed?* The ideas may all come from experience, but the capacity to receive the ideas must be inherent. I take the word capacity as a good plain English word, rather than the more technical word 'receptivity,' employed by Kant. And by capacity I mean the passive power* to receive ideas, whether in man or in any living thing by which ideas are received. A man and an elephant is each formed with capacities to receive ideas suited to the several place in the universe held by each.

"The more I look through nature the more I find that on all varieties of organized life is carefully bestowed the *capacity* to receive the impressions, be they called perceptions or ideas, which are adapted to the uses each creature is intended to derive from them. I find, then, that Man alone is endowed with the capacity to receive the ideas of a God, of Soul, of Worship, of a Hereafter. I see no trace of such a capacity in the inferior races; nor, however their intelligence may be refined by culture, is such capacity ever apparent in them.

"But wherever capacities to receive impressions are sufficiently general in any given species of creature to be called universal to that species, and yet not given to another species, then, from all analogy throughout Nature, those capacities are surely designed by Providence for the distinct use and conservation of the species to which they are given.

"It is no answer to me to say that the inherent capacities thus bestowed on Man do not suffice in themselves to make

* "Faculty is active power; capacity is passive power."—Sir W. Hamilton, "Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic," vol. i. p. 178.

him form right notions of a Deity or a Hereafter; because it is plainly the design of Providence that Man must learn to correct and improve all his notions by his own study and observation. He must build a hut before he can build a Parthenon; he must believe with the savage or the heathen before he can believe with the philosopher or Christian. In a word, in all his capacities, Man has only given to him, not the immediate knowledge of the Perfect, but the means to strive towards the Perfect. And thus one of the most accomplished of modern reasoners, to whose lectures you must have listened with delight in your college days, says well: 'Accordingly, the sciences always studied with keenest interest are those in a state of progress and uncertainty; absolute certainty and absolute completion would be the paralysis of any study, and the last worst calamity that could befall Man, as he is at present constituted, would be that full and final possession of speculative truth which he now vainly anticipates as the consummation of his intellectual happiness.' *

"Well, then, in all those capacities for the reception of impressions from external Nature which are given to Man and not to the brutes, I see the evidence of Man's Soul. I can understand why the inferior animal has no capacity to receive the idea of a Deity and of Worship—simply because the inferior animal, even if graciously admitted to a future life, may not therein preserve the sense of its identity. I can understand even why that sympathy with each other which we men possess, and which constitutes the great virtue we emphatically call Humanity, is not possessed by the lesser animals (or, at least, in a very rare and exceptional degree) even where they live in communities, like beavers, or bees, or ants; because men are destined to meet, to know, and to love each other in the life to come, and the bond between the brutes ceases here.

"Now the more, then, we examine the inherent capacities bestowed distinctly and solely on Man, the more they seem to distinguish him from the other races by their comprehension of objects beyond his life upon this earth. 'Man alone,' says Müller, 'can conceive abstract notions'; and it is in abstract notions, such as time, space, matter, spirit, light, form, quantity, essence, that man grounds, not only all philosophy, all science, but all that practically improves one generation for the benefit of the next. And why? Because all these abstract notions unconsciously lead the mind away from the material into the immaterial, from the present into the future. But if man

* Sir W. Hamilton's Lectures, vol. i. p. 10.

ceases to exist when he disappears in the grave, you must be compelled to affirm that he is the only creature in existence whom Nature or Providence has condescended to deceive and cheat by capacities for which there are no available objects. How nobly and how truly has Chalmers said: 'What inference shall we draw from this remarkable law in Nature that there is nothing waste and nothing meaningless in the feelings and faculties wherewith living creatures are endowed? For each desire there is a counterpart object; for each faculty there is room and opportunity for exercise, either in the present or the coming futurity. Now, but for the doctrine of immortality, Man would be an exception to this law; he would stand forth as an anomaly in Nature, with aspirations in his heart for which the universe had no antitype to offer, with capacities of understanding and thought that never were to be followed by objects of corresponding greatness through the whole history of his being! . . . .

"'With the inferior animals there is a certain squareness of adjustment, if we may so term it, between each desire and its correspondent gratification. The one is evenly met by the other, and there is a fulness and definiteness of enjoyment up to the capacity of enjoyment. Not so with Man who, both from the vastness of his propensities and the vastness of his powers, feels himself chained and beset in a field too narrow for him. He alone labors under the discomfort of an incongruity between his circumstances and his powers; and unless there be new circumstances awaiting him in a more advanced state of being, he, the noblest of Nature's products here, would turn out to be the greatest of her failures.' *

"This, then, I take to be the proof of Soul in Man, not that he has a mind, because, as you justly say, inferior animals have that, though in a lesser degree, but because he has the capacities to comprehend, as soon as he is capable of any abstract ideas whatsoever, the very truths not needed for self-conservation on earth, and therefore not given to yonder ox and opossum, viz., the nature of Deity—Soul—Hereafter. And in the recognition of these truths, the Human society, that excels the society of beavers, bees, and ants, by perpetual and progressive improvement on the emotions inherited from its progenitors, rests its basis. Thus, in fact, this world is benefited for men by their belief in the next, while the society

* Chalmers, Bridgewater Treatise, vol. ii. pp. 28, 30. Perhaps I should observe, that here and elsewhere in the dialogues between Faber and Fenwick, it has generally been thought better to substitute the words of the author quoted for the mere outline or purport of the quotation which memory afforded to the interlocutor.

of brutes remains age after age the same. Neither the bee nor the beaver has, in all probability, improved since the Deluge.

"But, inseparable from the conviction of these truths is the impulse of prayer and worship. It does not touch my argument when a philosopher of the school of Bolingbroke or Lucretius says, 'that the origin of prayer is in Man's ignorance of the phenomena of Nature.' That it is fear or ignorance which, 'when rocked the mountains or when groaned the ground, taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,' my answer is—the brutes are much more forcibly impressed by natural phenomena than Man is; the bird and the beast know before you and I do when the mountain will rock and the ground groan, and their instinct leads them to shelter; but it does not lead them to prayer. If my theory be right that Soul is to be sought not in the question whether mental ideas be innate or formed by experience, by the sense, by association or habit, but in the *inherent capacity* to receive ideas, then, the capacity bestowed on Man alone, to be impressed by Nature herself with the idea of a Power superior to Nature, with which Power he can establish commune, is a proof that to Man alone the Maker has made Nature itself proclaim His existence—that to Man alone the Deity vouchsafes the communion with Himself which comes from prayer."

"Even were this so," said I, "is not the Creator omniscient? If all-wise, all-foreseeing? If all-foreseeing, all-preordaining? Can the prayer of His creature alter the ways of His will?"

"For the answer to a question," returned Faber, "which is not unfrequently asked by the clever men of the world, I ought to refer you to the skilled theologians who have so triumphantly carried the reasoner over that ford of doubt which is crossed every day by the infant. But as we have not their books in the wilderness, I am contented to draw my reply as a necessary and logical sequence from the propositions I have sought to ground on the plain observation of Nature. I can only guess at the Deity's Omniscience, or His modes of enforcing His power, by the observation of His general laws; and of all His laws, I know of none more general than the impulse which bids men pray—which makes Nature so act, that all the phenomena of Nature we can conceive, however startling and inexperienced, do not make the brute pray; but there is not a trouble that can happen to Man, but what his impulse is to pray—always provided, indeed, that he is not a philosopher. I say not this in scorn of the philosopher, to whose wildest

guess our obligations are infinite, but simply because for all which is impulsive to Man, there is a reason in Nature which no philosophy can explain away. I do not, then, bewilder myself by seeking to bind and limit the Omniscience of the Deity to my finite ideas. I content myself with supposing that, somehow or other, He has made it quite compatible with His Omniscience that Man should obey the impulse which leads him to believe that, in addressing a Deity, he is addressing a tender, compassionate, benignant Father, and in that obedience shall obtain beneficial results. If that impulse be an illusion, then we must say that Heaven governs the earth by a lie; and that is impossible, because, reasoning by analogy, all Nature is truthful—that is, Nature gives to no species instincts or impulses which are not of service to it. Should I not be a shallow physician if, where I find in the human organization a principle or a property so general that I must believe it normal to the healthful conditions of that organization, I should refuse to admit that Nature intended it for use? Reasoning by all analogy, must I not say the habitual neglect of its use must more or less injure the harmonious wellbeing of the whole human system? I could have much to add upon the point in dispute by which the creed implied in your question would enthral the Divine mercy by the necessities of its Divine wisdom, and substitute for a benignant Deity a relentless Fate. But here I should exceed my province. I am no theologian. Enough for me that in all my afflictions, all my perplexities, an impulse, that I obey as an instinct, moves me at once to prayer. Do I find by experience that the prayer is heard, that the affliction is removed, the doubt is solved? That, indeed, would be presumptuous to say. But it is not presumptuous to think that by the efficacy of prayer my heart becomes fortified against the sorrow, and my reason more serene amidst the doubt."

I listened, and ceased to argue. I felt as if in that solitude, and in the pause of my wonted mental occupations, my intellect was growing languid, and its old weapons rusting in disuse. My pride took alarm. I had so from my boyhood cherished the idea of fame, and so glorified the search after knowledge, that I recoiled in dismay from the thought that I had relinquished knowledge, and cut myself off from fame. I resolved to resume my once favorite philosophical pursuits, re-examine and complete the Work to which I had once committed my hopes of renown; and, simultaneously, a restless desire seized me to communicate, though but at brief intervals, with other.

minds than those immediately within my reach—minds fresh from the old world, and reviving the memories of its vivid civilization. Emigrants frequently passed my doors, but I had hitherto shrunk from tendering the hospitalities so universally accorded in the colony. I could not endure to expose to such rough strangers my Lilian's mournful affliction, and that thought was not less intolerable to Mrs. Ashleigh. I now hastily constructed a log-building a few hundred yards from the house, and near the main track taken by travellers through the spacious pastures. I transported to this building my books and scientific instruments. In an upper story I placed my telescopes and lenses, my crucibles and retorts. I renewed my chemical experiments; I sought to invigorate my mind by other branches of science which I had hitherto less cultured: meditated new theories on Light and Color; collected specimens in Natural History; subjected animalcules to my microscope, geological fossils to my hammer. With all these quickened occupations of thought, I strove to distract myself from sorrow, and strengthen my reason against the illusions of my fantasy. The Luminous Shadow was not seen again on my wall, and the thought of Margrave himself was banished.

In this building I passed many hours of each day; more and more earnestly plunging my thoughts into the depths of abstract study, as Lilian's unaccountable dislike to my presence became more and more decided. When I thus ceased to think that my life cheered and comforted hers, my heart's occupation was gone. I had annexed to the apartment reserved for myself in this log-hut a couple of spare rooms, in which I could accommodate passing strangers. I learned to look forward to their coming with interest, and to see them depart with regret; yet, for the most part, they were of the ordinary class of colonial adventurers: bankrupt tradesmen, unlucky farmers, forlorn mechanics, hordes of unskilled laborers, now and then a briefless barrister, or a sporting collegian who had lost his all on the Derby. One day, however, a young man of education and manners that unmistakably proclaimed the cultured gentleman of Europe, stopped at my door. He was a cadet of a noble Prussian family, which for some political reasons had settled itself in Paris; there he had become intimate with young French nobles, and, living the life of a young French noble, had soon scandalized his German parents, forestalled his slender inheritance, and been compelled to fly his father's frown and his tailor's bills. All this he told me with a lively frankness which proved how much the wit of a

German can be quickened in the atmosphere of Paris. An old college friend, of birth inferior to his own, had been as unfortunate in seeking to make money as this young prodigal had been an adept in spending it. The friend, a few years previously, had accompanied other Germans in emigration to Australia, and was already thriving; the spendthrift noble was on his way to join the bankrupt trader, at a German settlement fifty miles distant from my house. This young man was unlike any German I ever met. He had all the exquisite levity by which the well-bred Frenchman gives to the doctrines of the Cynic the grace of the Epicurean. He owned himself to be good for nothing with an elegance of candor which not only disarmed censure, but seemed to challenge admiration; and, withal, the happy spendthrift was so inebriate with hope—sure that he should be rich before he was thirty. How and wherefore rich? He could have no more explained than I can square the circle. When the grand serious German nature does Frenchify itself, it can become so extravagantly French!

I listened, almost enviously, to this light-hearted profligate's babble, as we sat by my rude fireside—I, sombre man of science and sorrow, he, smiling child of idleness and pleasure, so much one of Nature's courtier-like nobles, that there, as he smoked his villanous pipe, in his dust-soiled shabby garments, and with his ruffianly revolver stuck into his belt, I would defy the daintiest Aristarch who ever presided as critic over the holiday world not to have said: "There smiles the genius beyond my laws, the born darling of the Graces, who in every circumstance, in every age, like Aristippus, would have socially charmed—would have been welcome to the orgies of a Cæsar or a Clodius, to the boudoirs of a Montespan or a Pompadour—have lounged through the Mulberry Gardens with a Rochester and a Buckingham, or smiled from the death-cart, with a Richelieu and a Lauzun, a gentleman's disdain of a mob!"

I was so thinking as we sat, his light talk frothing up from his careless lips, when suddenly from the spray and the sparkle of that light talk was flung forth the name of Margrave.

"Margrave!" I exclaimed. "Pardon me. What of him?"

"What of him! I asked if, by chance, you knew the only Englishman I ever had the meanness to envy?"

"Perhaps you speak of one person, and I thought of another."

"*Pardieu*, my dear host, there can scarcely be two Margraves! The one of whom I speak flashed like a meteor upon

Paris, bought from a prince of the Bourse a palace that might have lodged a prince of the blood-royal, eclipsed our Jew bankers in splendor, our *jeunesse dorée* in good looks and hair-brain adventures, and, strangest of all, filled his salons with philosophers and charlatans, chemists and spirit-rappers; insulting the gravest dons of the schools by bringing them face to face with the most impudent quacks, the most ridiculous dreamers—and yet, withal, himself so racy and charming, so *bon prince*, so *bon enfant!* For six months he was the rage at Paris: perhaps he might have continued to be the rage there for six years, but all at once the meteor vanished as suddenly as it had flashed. Is this the Margrave whom you know?"

"I should not have thought the Margrave whom I knew could have reconciled his tastes to the life of cities."

"Nor could this man: cities were too tame for him. He has gone to some far-remote wilds in the East—some say in search of the Philosopher's Stone; for he actually maintained in his house a Sicilian adventurer, who, when at work on that famous discovery, was stifled by the fumes of his own crucible. After that misfortune, Margrave took Paris in disgust, and we lost him."

"So this is the only Englishman whom you envy! Envy him? Why?"

"Because he is the only Englishman I ever met who contrived to be rich and yet free from the spleen; I envied him because one had only to look at his face and see how thoroughly he enjoyed the life of which your countrymen seem to be so heartily tired! But now that I have satisfied your curiosity, pray satisfy mine. Who and what is this Englishman?"

"Who and what was he supposed at Paris to be?"

"Conjectures were numberless. One of your countrymen suggested that which was most generally favored. This gentleman, whose name I forget, but who was one of those old *roués* who fancy themselves young because they live with the young, no sooner set eyes upon Margrave, than he exclaimed: 'Louis Grayle come to life again, as I saw him forty-four years ago! But no—still younger, still handsomer—it must be his son!'"

"Louis Grayle, who was said to be murdered at Aleppo?"

"The same. That strange old man was enormously rich; but it seems that he hated his lawful heirs, and left behind him a fortune so far below that which he was known to possess, that he must certainly have disposed of it secretly before his death. Why so dispose of it, if not to enrich some natural son,

whom, for private reasons, he might not have wished to acknowledge, or point out to the world by the signal bequest of his will? All that Margrave ever said of himself and the source of his wealth confirmed this belief. He frankly proclaimed himself a natural son, enriched by a father whose name he knew not nor cared to know."

"It is true. And Margrave quitted Paris for the East. When?"

"I can tell you the date within a day or two, for his flight preceded mine by a week; and, happily, all Paris was so busy in talking of it, that I slipped away without notice."

And the Prussian then named a date which it thrilled me to hear, for it was in that very month, and about that very day, that the Luminous Shadow had stood within my threshold.

The young Count now struck off into other subjects of talk: nothing more was said of Margrave. An hour or two afterwards he went on his way, and I remained long gazing musingly on the embers of the fire dying low on my hearth.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

My Work, my Philosophical Work—the ambitious hope of my intellectual life—how eagerly I returned to it again! Far away from my household grief, far away from my haggard perplexities—neither a Lilian nor a Margrave there!

As I went over what I had before written, each link in its chain of reasoning seemed so serried, that to alter one were to derange all: and the whole reasoning was so opposed to the possibility of the wonders I myself had experienced, so hostile to the subtle hypotheses of a Faber, or the childlike belief of an Amy, that I must have destroyed the entire work if I had admitted such contradictions to its design!

But the Work was I myself!—I, in my solid, sober, healthful mind, before the brain had been perplexed by a phantom. Were phantoms to be allowed as testimonies against science? No; in returning to my Book, I returned to my former Me!

How strange is that contradiction between our being as man and our being as Author! Take any writer enamoured of a system—a thousand things may happen to him every day which might shake his faith in that system; and while he moves about as mere man, his faith *is* shaken. But when he settles himself back into the phase of his being as author, the mere act of taking pen in hand and smoothing the paper be-

fore him, restores his speculations to their ancient mechanical train. The system, the beloved system, re-asserts its tyrannic sway, and he either ignores, or moulds into fresh proofs of his theory as author, all which, an hour before, had given his theory the lie in his living perceptions as man.

I adhered to my system; I continued my work. Here, in the barbarous desert, was a link between me and the Cities of Europe. All else might break down under me. The love I had dreamed of was blotted out from the world and might never be restored; my heart might be lonely, my life be an exile's. My reason might, at last, give way before the spectres which awed my senses, or the sorrows which stormed my heart. But here, at least, was a monument of my rational, thoughtful Me—of my individualized identity in multiform creation. And my mind, in the noon of its force, would shed its light on the earth when my form was resolved to its elements. Alas! in this very yearning for the Hereafter, though but the Hereafter of a Name, could I see only the craving of Mind, and hear not the whisper of Soul!

The avocation of a colonist, usually so active, had little interest for me. This vast territorial lordship, in which, could I have endeared its possession by the hopes that animate a Founder, I should have felt all the zest and the pride of ownership, was but the run of a common to the passing emigrant, who would leave no son to inherit the tardy products of his labor. I was not goaded to industry by the stimulus of need. I could only be ruined if I risked all my capital in the attempt to improve. I lived, therefore, amongst my fertile pastures, as careless of culture as the English occupant of the Highland moor, which he rents for the range of its solitudes.

I knew, indeed, that if ever I became avaricious, I might swell my modest affluence into absolute wealth. I had revisited the spot in which I had discovered the nugget of gold, and had found the precious metal in rich abundance just under the first coverings of the alluvial soil. I concealed my discovery from all. I knew that, did I proclaim it, the charm of my bush-life would be gone. My fields would be invested by all the wild adventurers who gather to gold as the vultures of prey round a carcase; my servants would desert me, my very flocks would be shepherdless!

Months again rolled on months. I had just approached the close of my beloved Work, when it was again suspended, and by an anguish keener than all which I had previously known.

Lilian became alarmingly ill. Her state of health, long

gradually declining, had hitherto admitted checkered intervals of improvement, and exhibited no symptoms of actual danger. But now she was seized with a kind of chronic fever, attended with absolute privation of sleep, an aversion to even the lightest nourishment, and an acute nervous susceptibility to all the outward impressions of which she had long seemed so unconscious; morbidly alive to the faintest sound, shrinking from the light as from a torture. Her previous impatience at my entrance into her room became aggravated into vehement emotions, convulsive paroxysms of distress; so that Faber banished me from her chamber, and, with a heart bleeding at every fibre, I submitted to the cruel sentence.

Faber had taken up his abode in my house and brought Amy with him; one or the other never left Lilian, night or day. The great physician spoke doubtfully of the case, but not despairingly.

"Remember," he said, "that in spite of the want of sleep, the abstinence from food, the form has not wasted as it would do were this fever inevitably mortal. It is upon that phenomenon I build a hope that I have not been mistaken in the opinion I hazarded from the first. We are now in the midst of the critical struggle between life and reason; if she preserve the one, my conviction is that she will regain the other. That seeming antipathy to yourself is a good omen. You are inseparably associated with her intellectual world; in proportion as she revives to it, must become vivid and powerful the reminiscences of the shock that annulled, for a time, that world to her. So I welcome, rather than fear, the over-susceptibility of the awakening senses to external sights and sounds. A few days will decide if I am right. In this climate the progress of acute maladies is swift, but the recovery from them is yet more startlingly rapid. Wait—endure—be prepared to submit to the will of Heaven; but do not despond of its mercy."

I rushed away from the consoler—away into the thick of the forests, the heart of the solitude. All around me, there, was joyous with life; the locust sang amidst the herbage; the cranes gamboled on the banks of the creek; the squirrel-like opossums frolicked on the feathery boughs. "And what," said I to myself—"what if that which seems so fabulous in the distant being whose existence has bewitched my own, be substantially true? What if to some potent medicament Margrave owes his glorious vitality, his radiant youth? Oh! that I had not so disdainfully turned away from his hinted solicitations—to what?—to nothing guiltier than lawful experiment. Had I

been less devoted a bigot to this vain school-craft, which we call the Medical Art, and which, alone in this age of science, has made no perceptible progress since the days of its earliest teachers—had I said, in the true humility of genuine knowledge, 'these alchemists were men of genius and thought; we owe to them nearly all the grand hints of our chemical science—is it likely that they would have been wholly drivellers and idiots in the one faith they clung to the most?'—had I said that, I might now have no fear of losing my Lilian. Why, after all, should there not be in Nature one primary essence, one master substance, in which is stored the specific nutriment of life?''

'Thus incoherently muttering to the woods what my pride of reason would not have suffered me gravely to say to my fellow-men, I fatigued my tormented spirits into a gloomy calm, and mechanically retraced my steps at the decline of day. I seated myself at the door of my solitary log-hut, leaning my cheek upon my hand, and musing. Wearily I looked up, roused by a discord of clattering hoofs and lumbering wheels on the hollow-sounding grass-track. A crazy, groaning vehicle, drawn by four horses, emerged from the copse of gum-trees—fast, fast along the road, which no such pompous vehicle had traversed since that which had borne me—luxurious satrap for an early colonist—to my lodge in the wilderness. What emigrant, rich enough to squander in the hire of such an equipage more than its cost in England, could thus be entering on my waste domain? An ominous thrill shot through me.

The driver—perhaps some broken-down son of luxury in the Old World, fit for nothing in the New World but to ply, for hire, the task that might have led to his ruin when piled in sport—stopped at the door of my hut, and called out: ''Friend, is not this the great Fenwick Section, and is not yonder long pile of building the Master's house?''

Before I could answer I heard a faint voice, within the vehicle, speaking to the driver; the last nodded, descended from his seat, opened the carriage-door, and offered his arm to a man, who, waving aside the proffered aid, descended slowly and feebly; paused a moment as if for breath, and then, leaning on his staff, walked from the road, across the sward rank with luxuriant herbage, through the little gate in the new-set fragrant wattle-fence, wearily, languidly, halting often, till he stood facing me, leaning both wan and emaciated hands upon his staff, and his meagre form shrinking deep within the folds of a cloak lined thick with costly sables. His face was sharp, his

complexion of a livid yellow, his eyes shone out from their hollow orbits, unnaturally enlarged and fatally bright. Thus, in ghastly contrast to his former splendor of youth and opulence of life, Margrave stood before me.

"I come to you," said Margrave, in accents hoarse and broken, "from the shores of the East. Give me shelter and rest. I have that to say which will more than repay you."

Whatever, till that moment, my hate and my fear of this unexpected visitant, hate would have been inhumanity, fear a meanness—conceived for a creature so awfully stricken down.

Silently, involuntarily, I led him into the house. There he rested a few minutes, with closed eyes and painful gasps for breath. Meanwhile, the driver brought from the carriage a travelling-bag and a small wooden chest or coffer, strongly banded with iron clamps. Margrave, looking up as the man drew near, exclaimed fiercely: "Who told you to touch that chest? How dare you? Take it from that man, Fenwick! Place it here—here by my side!"

I took the chest from the driver, whose rising anger, at being so imperiously rated in the land of democratic equality, was appeased by the gold which Margrave lavishly flung to him.

"Take care of the poor gentleman, squire," he whispered to me, in the spontaneous impulse of gratitude—"I fear he will not trouble you long. He must be monstrous rich. Arrived in a vessel hired all to himself, and a train of outlandish attendants, whom he has left behind in the town yonder! May I bait my horses in your stables? They have come a long way."

I pointed to the neighboring stables, and the man nodded his thanks, remounted his box, and drove off.

I returned to Margrave. A faint smile came to his lips as I placed the chest beside him.

"Ay, ay," he muttered. "Safe! safe! I shall soon be well again—very soon! And now I can sleep in peace!"

I led him into an inner room, in which there was a bed. He threw himself on it with a loud sigh of relief. Soon, half raising himself on his elbow, he exclaimed: "The chest—bring it hither! I need it always beside me! There! there! Now for a few hours of sleep; and then, if I can take food, or some such restoring cordial as your skill may suggest, I shall be strong enough to talk. We will talk!—we will talk."

His eyes closed heavily as his voice fell into a drowsy mutter: a moment more and he was asleep.

I watched beside him, in mingled wonder and compassion. Looking into that face, so altered yet still so young, I could

not sternly question what had been the evil of that mystic life, which seemed now oozing away through the last sands in the hour-glass. I placed my hand softly on his pulse; it scarcely beat. I put my ear to his breast, and involuntarily sighed, as I distinguished in its fluttering heave that dull, dumb sound, in which the heart seems knelling itself to the greedy grave!

Was this, indeed, the potent magician whom I had so feared!—this the guide to the Rosicrucian's secret of life's renewal, in whom, but an hour or two ago, my fancies gulled my credulous trust!

But suddenly, even while thus chiding my wild superstitions, a fear, that to most will seem scarcely less superstitious, shot across me. Could Lilian be affected by the near neighborhood of one to whose magnetic influence she had once been so strangely subjected? I left Margrave still sleeping, closed and locked the door of the hut, went back to my dwelling, and met Amy at the threshold. Her smile was so cheering that I felt at once relieved.

"Hush!" said the child, putting her finger to her lips, "she is so quiet! I was coming in search of you, with a message from her."

"From Lilian to me—what! to me?"

"Hush! About an hour ago she beckoned me to draw near to her, and then said very softly: 'Tell Allen that light is coming back to me, and it all settles on him—on him. Tell him that I pray to be spared to walk by his side on earth, hand-in-hand to that heaven which is no dream, Amy. Tell him that—no dream!'"

While the child spoke my tears gushed, and the strong hands in which I veiled my face quivered like the leaf of the aspen. And when I could command my voice, I said plaintively:

"May I not, then, see her?—only for a moment, and answer her message, though but by a look?"

"No, no!"

"No! Where is Faber?"

"Gone into the forest, in search of some herbs, but he gave me this note for you."

I wiped the blinding tears from my eyes, and read these lines:

"I have, though with hesitation, permitted Amy to tell you the cheering words, by which our beloved patient confirms my belief that reason is coming back to her—slowly, laboringly, but if she survive, for permanent restoration. On no account, attempt to precipitate or disturb the work of Nature. As

dangerous as a sudden glare of light to eyes long blind and newly regaining vision in the friendly and soothing dark, would be the agitation that your presence at this crisis would cause. Confide in me."

I remained brooding over these lines and over Lilian's message, long and silently, while Amy's soothing whispers stole into my ear, soft as the murmurs of a rill heard in the gloom of forests. Rousing myself at length, my thoughts returned to Margrave. Doubtless he would soon awake. I bade Amy bring me such slight nutriment as I thought best suited to his enfeebled state, telling her it was for a sick traveller, resting himself in my hut. When Amy returned, I took from her the little basket, with which she was charged, and having, meanwhile, made a careful selection from the contents of my medicine-chest, went back to the hut. I had not long resumed my place beside Margrave's pillow before he awoke.

"What o'clock is it?" he asked, with an anxious voice.

"About seven."

"Not later? That is well; my time is precious."

"Compose yourself, and eat."

I placed the food before him, and he partook of it, though sparingly, and as if with effort. He then dozed for a short time, again woke up, and impatiently demanded the cordial, which I had prepared in the mean while. Its effect was greater and more immediate than I could have anticipated, proving, perhaps, how much of youth there was still left in his system, however undermined and ravaged by disease. Color came back to his cheek, his voice grew perceptibly stronger. And as I lighted the lamp on the table near us—for it was growing dark—he gathered himself up, and spoke thus:

"You remember that I once pressed on you certain experiments. My object then was to discover the materials from which is extracted the specific that enables the organs of life to expel disease and regain vigor. In that hope, I sought your intimacy. An intimacy you gave, but withdrew."

"Dare you complain? Who and what was the being from whose intimacy I shrunk appalled?"

"Ask what questions you please," cried Margrave impatiently, "later—if I have strength left to answer them. But do not interrupt me, while I husband my force to say what alone is important to me and to you. Disappointed in the hopes I had placed in you, I resolved to repair to Paris, that great furnace of all bold ideas. I questioned learned formalists; I listened to audacious empirics. The first, with all their boasted

knowledge, were too timid to concede my premises; the second, with all their speculative daring, too knavish to let me trust to their conclusions. I found but one man, a Sicilian, who comprehended the secrets that are called occult, and had the courage to meet Nature and all her agencies face to face. He believed, and sincerely, that he was approaching the grand result, at the very moment when he perished from want of the common precautions which a tyro in chemistry would have taken. At his death the gaudy city became hateful; all its pretended pleasures only served to exhaust life the faster. The true joys of youth are those of the wild bird and wild brute, in the healthful enjoyment of Nature. In cities, youth is but old age with a varnish. I fled to the East; I passed through the tents of the Arabs; I was guided—no matter by whom or by what—to the house of a Dervish, who had had for his teacher the most erudite master of secrets occult, whom I knew years ago at Aleppo—why that exclamation?"

"Proceed. What I have to say will come—later."

"From this Dervish I half-forced and half-purchased the secrets I sought to obtain. I now know from what peculiar substance the so-called elixir of life is extracted; I know also the steps of the process through which that task is accomplished. You smile incredulously. What is your doubt? State it while I rest for a moment. My breath labors; give me more of the cordial."

"Need I tell you my doubt? You have, you say, at your command the elixir of life of which Cagliostro did not leave his disciples the recipe; and you stretch out your hand for a vulgar cordial which any village chemist could give you!"

"I can explain this apparent contradiction. The process by which the elixir is extracted from the material which hoards its essence, is one that requires a hardihood of courage which few possess. This Dervish, who had passed through that process once, was deaf to all prayer, and unmoved by all bribes, to attempt it again. He was poor; for the secret by which metals may be transmuted is not, as the old alchemists seem to imply, identical with that by which the elixir of life is extracted. He had only been enabled to discover, in the niggard strata of the lands within range of his travel, a few scanty morsels of the glorious substance. From these he had extracted scarcely enough of the elixir to fill a third of that little glass which I have just drained. He guarded every drop for himself. Who that holds healthful life as the one boon above all price to the living, would waste upon others what prolongs and

recruits his own being? Therefore, though he sold me his secret, he would not sell me his treasure."

"Any quack may sell you the information how to make not only an elixir, but a sun and a moon, and then scare you from the experiment by tales of the danger of trying it! How do you know that this essence which the Dervish possessed was the elixir of life, since, it seems, you have not tried on yourself what effect its precious drops could produce. Poor wretch! who once seemed to me so awfully potent, do you come to the Antipodes in search of a drug that only exists in the fables by which a child is amused?"

"The elixir of life is no fable," cried Margrave, with a kindling of eye, a power of voice, a dilation of form, that startled me in one just before so feeble. "That elixir was bright in my veins when we last met. From that golden draught of the life-spring of joy I took all that can gladden creation. What sage would not have exchanged his wearisome knowledge for my lusty revels with Nature? What monarch would not have bartered his crown, with its brain-ache of care, for the radiance that circled my brows, flashing out from the light that was in me? Oh again, oh again! to enjoy the freedom of air with the bird, and the glow of the sun with the lizard; to sport through the blooms of the earth, Nature's playmate and darling; to face, in the forest and desert, the pard and the lion—Nature's bravest and fiercest—her first-born, the heir of her realm, with the rest of her children for slaves!"

As these words burst from his lips, there was a wild grandeur in the aspect of this enigmatical being which I had never beheld in the former time of his affluent, dazzling youth. And, indeed, in his language, and in the thoughts it clothed, there was an earnestness, a concentration, a directness, a purpose, which had seemed wanting to his desultory talk in the earlier days. I expected that reaction of languor and exhaustion would follow his vehement outbreak of passion; but, after a short pause, he went on with steady accents. His will was sustaining his strength. He was determined to force his convictions on me, and the vitality, once so rich, rallied all its lingering forces to the aid of his intense desire.

"I tell you, then," he resumed, with deliberate calmness, "that, years ago, I tested in my own person that essence which is the sovereign medicament. In me, as you saw me at L——, you beheld the proof of its virtues. Feeble and ill as I am now, my state was incalculably more hopeless when formerly restored by the elixir. He from whom I then took the sublime

restorative, died without revealing the secret of its composition. What I obtained was only just sufficient to recruit the lamp of my life, then dying down, and no drop was left for renewing the light which wastes its own rays in the air that it gilds. Though the Dervish would not sell me his treasure, he permitted me to see it. The appearance and odor of this essence are strangely peculiar—unmistakable by one who has once beheld and partaken of it. In short, I recognized in the hands of the Dervish the bright life-renewer, as I had borne it away from the corpse of the Sage of Aleppo."

"Hold! Are you then, in truth, the murderer of Haroun, and is your true name Louis Grayle?"

"I am no murderer, and Louis Grayle did not leave me his name. I again adjure you to postpone for this night, at least, the questions you wish to address to me.

"Seeing that this obstinate pauper possessed that for which the pale owners of millions, at the first touch of palsy or gout, would consent to be paupers, of course I coveted the possession of the essence even more than the knowledge of the substance from which it is extracted. I had no coward fear of the experiment, which this timid driveller had not the nerve to renew. But still the experiment might fail. I must traverse land and sea to find the fit place for it. While, in the rags of the Dervish, the unfailing result of the experiment was at hand. The Dervish suspected my design, he dreaded my power. He fled on the very night in which I had meant to seize what he refused to sell me. After all, I should have done him no great wrong; for I should have left him wealth enough to transport himself to any soil in which the material for the elixir may be most abundant; and the desire of life would have given his shrinking nerves the courage to replenish its ravished store. I had Arabs in my pay, who obeyed me as hounds their master. I chased the fugitive. I came on his track, reached a house in a miserable village, in which, I was told, he had entered but an hour before. The day was declining, the light in the room imperfect. I saw in a corner what seemed to me the form of the Dervish, stooped to seize it, and my hand closed on an asp. The artful Dervish had so piled his rags that they took the shape of the form they had clothed, and he had left, as a substitute for the giver of life, the venomous reptile of death.

"The strength of my system enabled me to survive the effect of the poison; but during the torpor that numbed me, my Arabs, alarmed, gave no chase to my quarry. At last, though enfeebled and languid, I was again on my horse—again the

pursuit—again the track! I learned—but this time by a knowledge surer than man's—that the Dervish had taken his refuge in a hamlet that had sprung up over the site of a city once famed through Assyria. The same voice that informed me of his whereabouts warned me not to pursue. I rejected the warning. In my eager impatience I sprang on to the chase; in my fearless resolve I felt sure of the prey. I arrived at the hamlet wearied out, for my forces were no longer the same since the bite of the asp. The Dervish eluded me still; he had left the floors, on which I sank exhausted, but a few minutes before my horse stopped at the door. The carpet, on which he had rested, still lay on the ground. I dismissed the youngest and keenest of my troop in search of the fugitive. Sure that this time he would not escape, my eyes closed in sleep.

"How long I slept I know not—a long dream of solitude, fever, and anguish. Was it the curse of the Dervish's carpet? Was it a taint in the walls of the house, or of the air, which broods sickly and rank over places where cities lie buried? I know not; but the Pest of the East had seized me in slumber. When my senses recovered I found myself alone, plundered of my arms, despoiled of such gold as I had carried about me. All had deserted and left me as the living leave the dead whom the Plague has claimed for its own. As soon as I could stand I crawled from the threshold. The moment my voice was heard, my face seen, the whole squalid populace rose as on a wild beast—a mad dog. I was driven from the place with imprecations and stones, as a miscreant whom the Plague had overtaken while plotting the death of a holy man. Bruised and bleeding, but still defying, I turned in wrath on that dastardly rabble; they slunk away from my path. I knew the land for miles around. I had been in that land years, long years, ago. I came at last to the road which the caravans take on their way to Damascus. There I was found, speechless and seemingly lifeless, by some European travellers. Conveyed to Damascus, I languished for weeks between life and death. But for the virtue of that essence, which lingered yet in my veins, I could not have survived—even thus feeble and shattered. I need not say that I now abandoned all thought of discovering the Dervish. I had at least his secret, if I had failed of the paltry supply he had drawn from its uses. Such appliances as he had told me were needful, are procured in the East with more ease than in Europe. To sum up, I am here, instructed in all the knowledge, and supplied with all the aids, which warrant me in saying: 'Do you care for new life in its richest

enjoyments, if not for yourself, for one whom you love and would reprieve from the grave? Then, share with me in a task that a single night will accomplish, and ravish a prize by which the life that you value the most will be saved from the dust and the worm, to live on, ever young, ever blooming, when each infant, new-born while I speak, shall have passed to the grave. Nay, where is the limit to life, while the earth hides the substance by which life is renewed?' "

I give as faithfully as I can recall them the words in which Margrave addressed me. But who can guess by cold words transcribed, even were they artfully ranged by a master of language, the effect words produce when warm from the breath of the speaker? Ask one of an audience which some orator held enthralled, why his words do not quicken a beat in the reader's pulse, and the answer of one who had listened will be: "The words took their charm from the voice and the eye, the aspect, the manner, the man!" So it was with the incomprehensible being before me. Though his youth was faded, though his beauty was dimmed, though my fancies clothed him with memories of abhorrent dread, though my reason opposed his audacious beliefs and assumptions, still he charmed and spell-bound me; still he was the mystical fascinator; still, if the legends of magic had truth for their basis, he was the *born magician;* as genius, in what calling soever, *is* born with the gift to enchant and subdue us.

Constraining myself to answer calmly, I said: "You have told me your story; you have defined the object of the experiment in which you ask me to aid. You do right to bid me postpone my replies or my questions. Seek to recruit by sleep the strength you have so sorely tasked. To-morrow—"

"To-morrow, ere night, you will decide whether the man whom out of all earth I have selected to aid me, shall be the foe to condemn me to perish! I tell you plainly I need your aid, and your prompt aid. Three days from this, and all aid will be too late!"

I had already gained the door of the room, when he called to me to come back.

"You do not live in this hut, but with your family yonder. Do not tell them that I am here; let no one but yourself see me as I now am. Lock the door of the hut when you quit it. I should not close my eyes if I were not secure from intruders."

"There is but one in my house, or in these parts, whom I would except from the interdict you impose. You are aware of your own imminent danger; the life, which you believe the

discovery of a Dervish will indefinitely prolong, seems to my eye of physician to hang on a thread. I have already formed my own conjecture as to the nature of the disease that enfeebles you. But I would fain compare that conjecture with the weightier opinion of one whose experience and skill are superior to mine. Permit me, then, when I return to you to-morrow, to bring with me the great physician to whom I refer. His name will not, perhaps, be unknown to you: I speak of Julius Faber."

"A physician of the schools! I can guess well enough how learnedly he would prate, and how little he could do. But I will not object to his visit, if it satisfies you that, since I should die under the hands of the doctors, I may be permitted to indulge my own whim in placing my hopes in a Dervish. Yet stay. You have doubtless, spoken of me to this Julius Faber, your fellow-physician and friend? Promise me, if you bring him here, that you will not name me; that you will not repeat to him the tale I have told you, or the hope which has led me to these shores. What I have told to you, no matter whether, at this moment, you consider me the dupe of a chimera, is still under the seal of the confidence which a patient reposes in the physician he himself selects for his confidant. I select you, and not Julius Faber!"

"Be it as you will," said I, after a moment's reflection. "The moment you make yourself my patient I am bound to consider what is best for you. And you may more respect, and profit by, an opinion based upon your purely physical condition than by one in which you might suppose the advice was directed rather to the disease of the mind than to that of the body."

"How amazed and indignant your brother-physician will be if he ever see me a second time! How learnedly he will prove that, according to all corrected principles of science and nature, I ought to be dead!"

He uttered this jest with a faint, dreary echo of his old merry, melodious laugh, then turned his face to the wall; and so I left him to repose.

CHAPTER LXXV.

I FOUND Mrs. Ashleigh waiting for me in our usual sitting-room. She was in tears. She had begun to despond of Lilian's recovery, and she infected me with her own alarm. However, I disguised my participation in her fears, soothed and sustained her as best I could, and persuaded her to retire to rest. I saw Faber for a few minutes before I sought my

own chamber. He assured me that there was no perceptible change for the worse in Lilian's physical state since he had seen me, and that her mind, even within the last few hours, had become decidedly more clear. He thought that, within the next twenty-four hours, the reason would make a strong and successful effort for complete recovery; but he declined to hazard more than a hope that the effort would not exhaust the enfeebled powers of the frame. He himself was so in need of a few hours of rest that I ceased to harass him with questions which he could not answer, and fears which he could not appease. Before leaving him for the night, I told him briefly that there was a traveller in my hut smitten by a disease which seemed to me so grave that I would ask his opinion of the case, if he could accompany me to the hut the next morning.

My own thoughts that night were not such as would suffer me to sleep.

Before Margrave's melancholy state much of my former fear and abhorrence faded away. This being, so exceptional that fancy might well invest him with preternatural attributes, was now reduced by human suffering to human sympathy and comprehension; yet his utter want of conscience was still as apparent as in his day of joyous animal spirits. With what hideous candor he had related his perfidy and ingratitude to the man to whom, in his belief, he owed an inestimable obligation, and with what insensibility to the signal retribution which in most natures would have awakened remorse!

And by what dark hints and confessions did he seem to confirm the incredible memoir of Sir Philip Derval! He owned that he had borne from the corpse of Haroun the medicament to which he ascribed his recovery from a state yet more hopeless than that under which he now labored! He had alluded, rapidly, obscurely, to some knowledge at his command, "surer than man's"! And now, even now, the mere wreck of his former existence—by what strange charm did he still control and confuse my reason? And how was it that I felt myself murmuring, again and again: "But what, after all, if his hope be no chimera, and if Nature did hide a secret by which I could save the life of my beloved Lilian?"

And again and again, as that thought would force itself on me, I rose and crept to Lilian's threshold, listening to catch the faintest sound of her breathing. All still, all dark! In that sufferer recognized science detects no mortal disease, yet dares not bid me rely on its amplest resources of skill to turn aside from her slumber the stealthy advance of death; while

in yon log-hut one whose malady recognized science could not doubt to be mortal has composed himself to sleep confident of life! Recognized science! recognized ignorance! The science of to-day is the ignorance of to-morrow! Every year some bold guess lights up a truth to which, but the year before, the schoolmen of science were as blinded as moles.

"What, then," my lips kept repeating—"what if Nature do hide a secret by which the life of my life can be saved. What do we know of the secrets of Nature? What said Newton himself of his knowledge? 'I am like a child picking up pebbles and shells on the sand, while the great ocean of Truth lies all undiscovered around me!' And did Newton himself, in the ripest growth of his matchless intellect, hold the creed of the alchemists in scorn? Had he not given to one object of their research, in the transmutation of metals, his days and his nights? Is there proof that he ever convinced himself that the research was the dream which we, who are not Newtons, call it? * And that other great sage, inferior only to Newton, the calculating doubt-weigher, Descartes, had he not believed in the yet nobler hope of the alchemists—believed is some occult nostrum or process by which human life could attain to the age of the Patriarchs?"†

* "Besides the three great subjects of Newton's labors—the fluxional calculus, physical astronomy, and optics—a very large portion of his time, while resident in his college, was devoted to researches of which scarcely a trace remains. Alchemy, which had fascinated so many eager and ambitious minds, seems to have tempted Newton with an overwhelming force. What theories he formed, what experiments he tried, in that laboratory where, it is said, the fire was scarcely extinguished for weeks together, will never be known. It is certain that no success attended his labors; and Newton was not a man—like Kepler—to detail to the world all the hopes and disappointments, all the crude and mystical fancies, which mixed themselves up with his career of philosophy. . . . Many years later we find Newton in correspondence with Locke, with reference to a mysterious red earth by which Boyle who was then recently dead, had asserted that he could effect the grand desideratum of multiplying gold. By this time, however, Newton's faith had become somewhat shaken by the unsatisfactory communications which he had himself received from Boyle on the subject of the golden recipe, though he did not abandon the idea of giving the experiment a further trial as soon as the weather should become suitable for furnace experiments."—*Quarterly Review*, No. 220, pp. 125-6.

† Southey, in his Doctor, vol. vi. p. 2, reports the conversation of Sir Kenelm Digby with Descartes, in which the great goemetrician said: "That as for rendering man immortal, it was what he could not venture to promise, but that he was very sure he could prolong his life to the standard of the patriarchs." And Southey adds, "that St. Evremond, to whom Digby repeated this, says that this opinion of Descartes was well known both to his friends in Holland and in France." By the stress Southey lays on this hearsay evidence, it is clear that he was not acquainted with the works and biography of Descartes, or he would have gone to the fountain-head for authority on Descartes' opinions—viz., Descartes himself. It is to be wished that Southey had done so, for no one more than he would have appreciated the exquisitely candid and lovable nature of the illustrious Frenchman, and the sincerity with which he cherished in his heart whatever doctrine he conceived in his understanding. Descartes, whose knowledge of anatomy was considerable, had that passion for the art of medicine which is almost inseparable from the pursuit of natural philosophy. At the age of twenty-four he had sought (in Germany) to obtain initiation into the brotherhood of the Rosicrucians, but unluckily could not discover any member of the society to introduce him. "He desired," says Cousin, "to assure the health of man, diminish his ills, extend his existence. He was terrified by the rapid and almost momentary passage of man upon earth. He believed it was not, perhaps, impossible to prolong

In thoughts like these the night wore away, the moonbeams that streamed through my windows lighting up the spacious solitudes beyond—mead and creek, forest-land, mountain-top—and the silence without broken by the wild cry of the night-hawk and the sibilant, melancholy dirge of the shining chrysococyx *—bird that never sings but at night, and obstinately haunts the roofs of the sick and dying, ominous of woe and death.

But up sprang the sun, and, chasing these gloomy sounds, out burst the wonderful chorus of Australian groves, the great kingfisher opening the jocund, melodious babble with the glee of his social laugh.

And now I heard Faber's step in Lilian's room—heard through the door her soft voice, though I could not distinguish the words. It was not long before I saw the kind physician standing at the threshold of my chamber. He pressed his finger to his lip, and made me a sign to follow him. I obeyed, with noiseless tread and stifled breathing. He awaited me in the garden under the flowering acacias, passed his arm in mine, and drew me into the open pasture-land.

"Compose yourself," he then said; "I bring you tidings both of gladness and of fear. Your Lilian's mind is restored:

its duration." There is a hidden recess of grandeur in this idea, and the means proposed by Descartes for the execution of his project were not less grand. In his Discourse on Method, Descartes says, "If it is possible to find some means to render generally men more wise and more able than they have been till now, it is, I believe, in medicine that those means must be sought. . . I am sure that there is no one, even in the medical profession, who will not avow that all which one knows of the medical art is almost nothing in comparison to that which remains to learn, and that one could be exempted from an infinity of maladies, both of body and mind, and even, perhaps, from the decrepitude of old age, if one had sufficient lore of their causes and of all the remedies which nature provides for them. Therefore, having *a design to employ all my life in the research of a science so necessary, and having discovered a path which appears to me such that one ought infallibly, in following, to find it*, if one is not hindered permanently by the brevity of life or by the defects of experience, I consider that there is no better remedy against those two hindrances than to communicate faithfully to the public the little I have found," etc. (Discours de la Méthode, vol. i. Œuvres de Descartes, Cousin's edition.) And again, in his Correspondence (vol. ix. p. 341), he says: "The conservation of health has been always the principal object of my studies, and I have no doubt that there is a means of acquiring much knowledge touching medicine which, up to this time, is ignored." He then refers to his meditated Treatise on Animals as only an entrance upon that knowledge. But whatever secrets Descartes may have thought to discover, they are not made known to the public according to his promise. And in a letter to M. Chanut, written 1646 (four years before he died), he says ingenuously: "I will tell you in confidence that the notion, such as it is, which I have endeavored to acquire in physical philosophy, had greatly assisted me to establish certain foundations for moral philosophy; and that I am more easily satisfied upon this point than I am on many others touching medicine, to which I have, nevertheless, devoted much more time. So that (adds the grand thinker with a pathetic nobleness)—"so that, *instead of finding the means to preserve life, I have found another good, more easy and more sure, which is—not to fear death.*"

* Chrysococyx lucidus—viz., the bird popularly called the shining or bronzed cuckoo. "Its note is an exceedingly melancholy whistle, heard at night, when it is very annoying to any sick or nervous person who may be inclined to sleep. I have known many instances where the bird has been perched on a tree in the vicinity of the room of an invalid, uttering its mournful notes, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that it could be dislodged from its position."—Dr. Bennet's Gatherings of a Naturalist in Australasia.

even the memories which had been swept away by the fever that followed her return to her home in L—— are returning, though as yet indistinct. She yearns to see you, to bless you for all your noble devotion, your generous, great-hearted love· but I forbid such interview now. If, in a few hours, she become either decidedly stronger or decidedly more enfeebled, you shall be summoned to her side. Even if you are condemned to a loss for which the sole consolation must be placed in the life hereafter, you shall have, at least, the last mortal commune of soul with soul. Courage—courage! You are man! Bear as man what you have so often bid other men submit to endure."

I had flung myself on the ground—writhing worm that had no home but on earth! Man, indeed! Man! All, at that moment, I took from manhood was its acute sensibility to love and to anguish!

But after all such paroxysms of mortal pain, there comes a strange lull. Thought itself halts, like the still hush of water between two descending torrents. I rose in a calm, which Faber might well mistake for fortitude.

"Well," I said quietly, "fulfil your promise. If Lilian is to pass away from me, I shall see her, at least, again; no wall, you tell me, between our minds; mind to mind once more—once more!"

"Allen," said Faber, mournfully and softly, "why do you shun to repeat my words—soul to soul?"

"Ay, ay—I understand. Those words mean that you have resigned all hope that Lilian's life will linger here, when her mind comes back in full consciousness; I know well that last lightning flash and the darkness which swallows it up!"

"You exaggerate my fears. I have not resigned the hope that Lilian will survive the struggle through which she is passing, but it will be cruel to deceive you—my hope is weaker than it was."

"Ay, ay. Again, I understand! Your science is in fault—it desponds. Its last trust is in the wonderful resources of Nature—the vitality stored in the young!"

"You have said: Those resources of Nature are wondrous. The vitality of youth is a fountain springing up from the deeps out of sight, when, a moment before, we had measured the drops oozing out from the sands, and thought that the well was exhausted."

"Come with me—come. I told you of another sufferer yon-

der. I want your opinion of his case. But can you be spared a few minutes from Lilian's side?"

"Yes; I left her asleep. What is the case that perplexes your eye of physician, which is usually keener than mine, despite all the length of my practice?"

"The sufferer is young—his organization rare in its vigor. He has gone through and survived assaults upon life that are commonly fatal. His system has been poisoned by the fangs of a venomous asp, and shattered by the blast of the plague. These alone, I believe, would not suffice to destroy him. But he is one who has a strong dread of death. And while the heart was thus languid and feeble, it has been gnawed by emotions of hope or of fear. I suspect that he is dying, not from the bite of the reptile, not from the taint of the pestilence, but from the hope and the fear that have overtasked the heart's functions. Judge for yourself."

We were now at the door of the hut. I unlocked it: we entered. Margrave had quitted his bed, and was pacing the room slowly. His step was less feeble, his countenance less haggard than on the previous evening.

He submitted himself to Faber's questioning with a quiet indifference, and evidently cared nothing for any opinion which the great physician might found on his replies.

When Faber had learned all he could, he said, with a grave smile: "I see that my advice will have little weight with you; such as it is, at least reflect on it. The conclusions to which your host arrived in his view of your case, and which he confided to me, are, in my humble judgment, correct. I have no doubt that the great organ of the heart is involved in the cause of your sufferings; but the heart is a noble and much-enduring organ. I have known men in whom it has been more severely and unequivocally affected with disease than it is in you, live on for many years, and ultimately die of some other disorder. But then life was held, as yours must be held, upon one condition—repose. I enjoin you to abstain from all violent action; to shun all excitements that cause moral disturbance. You are young: would you live on, you must live as the old. More than this—it is my duty to warn you that your tenure on earth is very precarious; you may attain to many years; you may be suddenly called hence to-morrow. The best mode to regard this uncertainty with the calm in which is your only chance of long life, is so to arrange all your worldly affairs, and so to discipline all your human anxieties, as to feel always prepared for the summons that may come without warn-

ing. For the rest, quit this climate as soon as you can—it is the climate in which the blood courses too quickly for one who should shun all excitement. Seek the most equable atmosphere, choose the most tranquil pursuits, and Fenwick himself, in his magnificent pride of stature and strength, may be nearer the grave than you are."

"Your opinion coincides with that I have just heard?" asked Margrave, turning to me.

"In much—yes."

"It is more favorable than I should have supposed. I am far from disdaining the advice so kindly offered. Permit me, in turn, two or three questions, Dr. Faber. Do you prescribe to me no drugs from your pharmacopœia?"

"Drugs may palliate many sufferings incidental to organic disease, but drugs cannot reach organic disease itself."

"Do you believe that, even where disease is plainly organic, Nature herself has no alternative and reparative powers, by which the organ assailed may recover itself?"

"A few exceptional instances of such forces in nature are upon record; but we must go by general laws, and not by exceptions."

"Have you never known instances—do you not at this moment know one—in which a patient whose malady baffles the doctor's skill, imagines or dreams of a remedy? Call it a whim if you please, learned sir; do you not listen to the whim, and, in despair of your own prescriptions, comply with those of the patient?"

Faber changed countenance, and even started. Margrave watched him and laughed.

"You grant that there are such cases, in which the patient gives the law to the physician. Now, apply your experience to my case. Suppose some strange fancy had seized upon my imagination—that is the doctor's cant word for all phenomena which we call exceptional—some strange fancy that I had thought of a cure for this disease for which you have no drugs; and suppose this fancy of mine to be so strong, so vivid, that to deny me its gratification would produce the very emotion from which you warn me as fatal—storm the heart, that you would soothe to repose, by the passions of rage and despair—would you, as my trusted physician, concede or deny me my whim?"

"Can you ask? I should grant it at once, if I had no reason to know that the thing that you fancied was harmful."

"Good man and wise doctor! I have no other question to ask. I thank you."

Faber looked hard on the young, wan face, over which played a smile of triumph and irony; then turned away with an expression of doubt and trouble on his own noble countenance. I followed him silently into the open air.

"Who and what is this visitor of yours?" he asked abruptly.

"Who and what! I cannot tell you."

Faber remained some moments musing, and muttering slowly to himself: "Tut! but a chance coincidence—a haphazard allusion to a fact which he could not have known!"

"Faber," said I abruptly, "can it be that Lilian is the patient in whose self-suggested remedies you confide more than in the various learning at command of your practised skill?"

"I cannot deny it," replied Faber reluctantly. "In the intervals of that suspense from waking sense, which in her is not sleep, nor yet altogether catalepsy, she has, for the last few days, stated accurately the precise moment in which the trance—if I may so call it—would pass away, and prescribed for herself the remedies that should be then administered. In every instance, the remedies so self-prescribed, though certainly not those which would have occurred to my mind, have proved efficacious. Her rapid progress to reason I ascribe to the treatment she herself ordained in her trance, without remembrance of her own suggestions when she awoke. I had meant to defer communicating these phenomena in the idiosyncrasy of her case until our minds could more calmly inquire into the process by which ideas—not apparently derived, as your metaphysical school would derive all ideas, from preconceived experiences—will thus sometimes act like an instinct on the human sufferer for self-preservation, as the bird is directed to the herb or the berry which heals or assuages its ailments. We know how the mesmerists would account for this phenomenon of hygienic introvision and clairvoyance. But here, there is no mesmerizer, unless the patient can be supposed to mesmerize herself. Long, however, before mesmerism was heard of, medical history attests examples in which patients who baffled the skill of the ablest physicians have fixed their fancies on some remedy that physicians would call inoperative for good or for harm, and have recovered by the remedies thus singularly self-suggested. And Hippocrates himself, if I construe his meaning rightly, recognizes the powers for self-cure which the condition of trance will sometimes bestow on the sufferer, 'where (says the father of our art) the sight being closed to the external, the soul more truthfully perceives the affections of the body.' In short—I own it—in this instance,

the skill of the physician has been a compliant obedience to the instinct called forth in the patient. And the hopes I have hitherto permitted myself to give you were founded on my experience that her own hopes, conceived in trance, had never been fallacious or exaggerated. The simples that I gathered for her yesterday she had described; they are not in our herbal. But as they are sometimes used by the natives, I had the curiosity to analyze their chemical properties shortly after I came to the colony, and they seemed to me as innocent as lime-blossoms. They are rare in this part of Australia, but she told me where I should find them—a remote spot, which she has certainly never visited. Last night, when you saw me disturbed, dejected, it was because, for the first time, the docility with which she had hitherto, in her waking state, obeyed her own injunctions in the state of trance, forsook me. She could not be induced to taste the decoction I had made from the herbs; and if you found me this morning with weaker hopes than before, this is the real cause, viz., that when I visited her at sunrise, she was not in sleep but in trance, and in that trance she told me that she had nothing more to suggest or reveal; that on the complete restoration of her senses, which was at hand, the abnormal faculties vouchsafed to trance would be withdrawn. 'As for my life,' she said quietly, as if unconscious of our temporary joy or woe in the term of its tenure here—'as for my life, your aid is now idle; my own vision obscure; on my life a dark and cold shadow is resting. I cannot foresee if it will pass away. When I strive to look around, I see but my Allen—"

"And so," said I, mastering my emotions, "in bidding me hope, you did not rely on your own resources of science, but on the whisper of nature in the brain of your patient?"

"It is so."

We both remained silent some moments, and then, as he disappeared within my house, I murmured:

"And when she strives to look beyond the shadow, she sees only me! Is there some prophet-hint of Nature there also, directing me not to scorn the secret which a wanderer, so suddenly dropt on my solitude, assures me that Nature will sometimes reveal to her seeker? And oh! that dark wanderer—has Nature a marvel more weird than himself?"

CHAPTER LXXVI.

I STRAYED through the forest till noon, in debate with myself, and strove to shape my wild doubts into purpose, before I could nerve and compose myself again to face Margrave alone.

I re-entered the hut. To my surprise, Margrave was not in the room in which I had left him, nor in that which adjoined it. I ascended the stairs to the kind of loft in which I had been accustomed to pursue my studies, but in which I had not set foot since my alarm for Lilian had suspended my labors. There I saw Margrave quietly seated before the manuscript of my Ambitious Work, which lay open on the rude table just as I had left it, in the midst of its concluding summary.

"I have taken the license of former days, you see," said Margrave, smiling, "and have hit by chance on a passage I can understand without effort. But why such a waste of argument to prove a fact so simple? In man, as in brute, life once lost, is lost forever; and that is why life is so precious to man."

I took the book from his hand, and flung it aside in wrath. His approval revolted me more with my own theories than all the argumentative rebukes of Faber.

"And now," I said sternly, "the time has come for the explanation you promised. Before I can aid you in any experiment that may serve to prolong your life, I must know how far that life has been a baleful and destroying influence?"

"I have some faint recollection of having saved *your* life from an imminent danger, and if gratitude were the attribute of man, as it is of the dog, I should claim your aid to serve mine as a right. Ask me what you will. You must have seen enough of me to know that I do not affect either the virtues or vices of others. I regard both with so supreme an indifference, that I believe I am vicious or virtuous unawares. I know not if I can explain what seems to have perplexed you, but if I cannot explain I have no intention to lie. Speak—I listen! We have time enough now before us."

So saying, he reclined back in the chair, stretching out his limbs wearily. All round this spoilt darling of Material Nature the aids and appliances of Intellectual Science! Books, and telescopes, and crucibles, with the light of day coming through a small circular aperture in the boarded casement, as I had constructed the opening for my experimental observation of the prismal rays.

While I write, his image is as visible before my remem-

brance as if before the actual eye—beautiful even in its decay, awful even in its weakness, mysterious as in Nature herself amidst all the mechanism by which our fancied knowledge attempts to measure her laws and analyze her light.

But at that moment no such subtle reflections delayed my inquisitive eager mind from its immediate purpose—who and what was this creature boasting of a secret through which I might rescue from death the life of her who was my all upon the earth?

I gathered rapidly and succinctly together all that I knew and all that I guessed of Margrave's existence and arts. I commenced from my Vision in that mimic Golgotha of creatures inferior to man, close by the scene of man's most trivial and meaningless pastime. I went on—Derval's murder; the missing contents of the casket; the apparition seen by the maniac assassin guiding him to the horrid deed; the luminous haunting Shadow; the positive charge in the murdered man's memoir connecting Margrave with Louis Grayle, and accusing him of the murder of Haroun; the night in the moonlit pavilion at Derval Court; the baneful influence on Lilian; the struggle between me and himself in the house by the seashore—the strange All that is told in this Strange Story.

But, warming as I spoke, and in a kind of fierce joy to be enabled thus to free my own heart of the doubts that had burdened it, now that I was fairly face to face with the being by whom my reason had been so perplexed and my life so tortured, I was restrained by none of the fears lest my own fancy deceived me, with which in his absence I had striven to reduce to natural causes the portents of terror and wonder. I stated plainly, directly, the beliefs, the impressions which I had never dared even to myself to own without seeking to explain them away. And coming at last to a close, I said: "Such are the evidences that seem to me to justify abhorrence of the life that you ask me to aid in prolonging. Your own tale of last night but confirms them. And why to me—to me—do you come with wild entreaties to lengthen the life that has blighted my own? How did you ever learn the home in which I sought unavailing refuge? How—as your hint to Faber clearly revealed—were you aware that, in yon house, where the sorrow is veiled, where the groan is suppressed, where the foot-tread falls ghostlike, there struggles now between life and death my heart's twin, my world's sunshine? Ah! through my terror for her, is it a demon that tells you how to bribe my abhorrence into submission, and supple my reason into use to your ends?"

Margrave had listened to me throughout with a fixed attention, at times with a bewildered stare, at times with exclamations of surprise, but not of denial. And when I had done, he remained for some moments silent, seemingly stupefied, passing his hand repeatedly over his brow, in the gesture so familiar to him in former days.

At length he said quietly, without evincing any sign either of resentment or humiliation:

"In much that you tell me I recognize myself: in much I am as lost in amazement as you in wild doubt or fierce wrath. Of the effect that you say Philip Derval produced on me I have no recollection. Of himself I have only this—that he was my foe, that he came to England intent on schemes to shorten my life or destroy its enjoyments. All my faculties tend to self-preservation; there, they converge as rays in a focus; in that focus they illume and—they burn. I willed to destroy my intended destroyer. Did my will enforce itself on the agent to which it was guided? Likely enough. Be it so. Would you blame me for slaying the tiger or serpent—not by the naked hand, but by weapons that arm it? But what could tiger and serpent do more against me than the man who would rob me of life? He had his arts for assault, I had mine for self-defence. He was to me as the tiger that creeps through the jungle, or the serpent uncoiling his folds for the spring. Death to those whose life is destruction to mine, be they serpent, or tiger, or man! Derval perished. Yes! the spot in which the maniac had buried the casket *was* revealed to me—no matter how; the contents of the casket passed into my hands. I coveted that possession because I believed that Derval had learned from Haroun of Aleppo the secret by which the elixir of life is prepared, and I supposed that some stores of the essence would be found in his casket. I was deceived—not a drop! What I there found I knew not how to use or apply, nor did I care to learn. What I sought was not there. You see a luminous shadow of myself; it haunts, it accosts, it compels you. Of this I know nothing. Was it the emanation of my intense will really producing this spectre of myself? Or was it the thing of your own imagination—an imagination which my will impressed and subjugated? I know not. At the hours when my shadow, real or supposed, was with you, my senses would have been locked in sleep. It is true, however, that I intensely desire to learn from races always near to man, but concealed from his every-day vision, the secret that I believed Philip Derval had carried with him to the tomb;

and from some cause or another I cannot now of myself alone, as I could years ago, subject those races to my command—I must, in that, act through or with the mind of another. It is true that I sought to impress upon your waking thoughts the images of the circle, the powers of the wand, which, in your trance or sleep-walking, made you the involuntary agent of my will. I knew by a dream—for by dreams, more or less vivid, are the results of my waking will sometimes divulged to myself—that the spell had been broken, the discovery I sought not effected. All my hopes were then transferred from yourself, the dull votary of science, to the girl whom I charmed to my thraldom through her love for you and through her dreams of a realm which the science of schools never enters. In her, imagination was all pure and all potent; and tell me, O practical reasoner, if reason has ever advanced one step into knowledge except through that imaginative faculty which is strongest in the wisdom of ignorance, and weakest in the ignorance of the wise. Ponder this, and those marvels that perplex you will cease to be marvellous. I pass on to the riddle that puzzles you most. By Philip Derval's account I am, in truth, Louis Grayle restored to youth by the elixir, and while yet infirm, decrepit, murdered Haroun—a man of a frame as athletic as yours! By accepting this notion you seem to yourself alone to unravel the mysteries you ascribe to my life and my powers. O wise philosopher! O profound logician! you accept that notion, yet hold my belief in the Dervish's tale a chimera! I am Grayle made young by the elixir, and yet the elixir itself is a fable!"

He paused and laughed, but the laugh was no longer even an echo of its former merriment or playfulness—a sinister and terrible laugh, mocking, threatening, malignant.

Again he swept his hand over his brows and resumed:

"Is it not easier to so accomplished a sage as you to believe that the idlers of Paris have guessed the true solution of that problem—my place on this earth? May I not be the love-son of Louis Grayle? And when Haroun refused the elixir to him, or he found that his frame was too far exhausted for even the elixir to repair organic lesions of structure in the worn frame of old age, may he not have indulged the common illusion of fathers, and soothed his death-pangs with the thought that he should live again in his son? Haroun is found dead on his carpet—rumor said strangled. What proof of the truth of that rumor? Might he not have passed away in a fit? Will it lessen your perplexity if I state recollections? They are

vague; they often perplex myself; but so far from a wish to deceive you, my desire is to relate them so truthfully that you may aid me to reduce them into more definite form."

His face now became very troubled, the tone of his voice very irresolute: the face and the voice of a man who is either blundering his way through an intricate falsehood, or through obscure reminiscences.

"This Louis Grayle! this Louis Grayle! I remember him well, as one remembers a nightmare. Whenever I look back, before the illness of which I will presently speak, the image of Louis Grayle returns to me. I see myself with him in African wilds, commanding the fierce Abyssinians. I see myself with him in the fair Persian valley—lofty snow-covered mountains encircling the garden of roses. I see myself with him in the hush of the golden noon, reclined by the spray of cool fountains; now listening to cymbals and lutes, now arguing with graybeards on secrets bequeathed by the Chaldees. With him, with him in moonlit nights, stealing into the sepulchres of mythical kings. I see myself with him in the aisles of dark caverns, surrounded by awful shapes, which have no likeness amongst the creatures of earth. Louis Grayle! Louis Grayle! all my earlier memories go back to Louis Grayle! All my arts and powers, all that I have learned of the languages spoken in Europe, of the sciences taught in her schools, I owe to Louis Grayle. But am I one and the same with him? No—I am but a pale reflection of his giant intellect. I have not even a reflection of his childlike agonies of sorrow. Louis Grayle! He stands apart from me, as a rock from the tree that grows out from its chasms. Yes, the gossip was right; I must be his son."

He leant his face on both hands, rocking himself to and fro. At length, with a sigh, he resumed:

"I remember, too, a long and oppressive illness, attended with racking pains; a dismal journey in a wearisome litter; the light hand of the woman Ayesha, so sad and so stately, smoothing my pillow or fanning my brows. I remember the evening on which my nurse drew the folds of the litter aside, and said, 'See Aleppo! and the star of thy birth shining over its walls!'

"I remember a face inexpressibly solemn and mournful. I remember the chill that the calm of its ominous eye sent through my veins—the face of Haroun, the Sage of Aleppo. I remember the vessel of crystal he bore in his hand, and the blessed relief from my pains that a drop from the essence

which flashed through the crystal bestowed! And then—and then—I remember no more till the night on which Ayesha came to my couch and said, 'Rise.'

"And I rose, leaning on her, supported by her. We went through dim narrow streets, faintly lit by wan stars, disturbing the prowl of the dogs, that slunk from the look of that woman. We came to a solitary house, small and low, and my nurse said, 'Wait.'

"She opened the door and went in; I seated myself on the threshold. And after a time she came out from the house, and led me, still leaning on her, into a chamber.

"A man lay, as in sleep, on the carpet, and beside him stood another man, whom I recognized as Ayesha's special attendant—an Indian. 'Haroun is dead,' said Ayesha. 'Search for that which will give thee new life. Thou hast seen, and wilt know it, not I.'

"And I put my hand on the breast of Haroun—for the dead man was he—and drew from it the vessel of crystal.

"Having done so, the frown on his marble brow appalled me. I staggered back, and swooned away.

"I came to my senses, recovered and rejoicing, miles afar from the city, the dawn red on its distant walls. Ayesha had tended me; the elixir had already restored me.

"My first thought, when full consciousness came back to me, rested on Louis Grayle, for he, also, had been at Aleppo. I was but one of his numerous train. He too, was enfeebled and suffering; he had sought the known skill of Haroun for himself as for me; and this woman loved and had tended him as she had loved and tended me. And my nurse told me that he was dead, and forbade me henceforth to breathe his name.

"We traveled on—she and I, and the Indian, her servant—my strength still renewed by the wondrous elixir. No longer supported by her, what gazelle ever roved through its pasture with a bound more elastic than mine?

"We came to a town, and my nurse placed before me a mirror. I did not recognize myself. In this town we rested, obscure, till the letter there reached me by which I learned that I was the offspring of love, and enriched by the care of a father recently dead. Is it not clear that Louis Grayle was this father?"

"If so, was the woman, Ayesha, your mother?"

"The letter said that 'my mother had died in my infancy.' Nevertheless, the care with which Ayesha had tended me induced a suspicion that made me ask her the very question you

put. She wept when I asked her, and said: 'No, only my nurse. And now I needed a nurse no more.' The day after I received the letter which announced an inheritance that allowed me to vie with the nobles of Europe, this woman left me, and went back to her tribe."

"Have you never seen her since?"

Margrave hesitated a moment, and then answered, though with seeming reluctance: "Yes, at Damascus. Not many days after I was borne to that city by the strangers, who found me half-dead on their road, I woke one morning to find her by my side. And she said: 'In joy and in health you did not need me. I am needed now.'"

"Did you then deprive yourself of one so devoted? You have not made this long voyage—from Egypt to Australia—alone; you, to whom wealth gave no excuse for privation?"

"The woman came with me; and some chosen attendants. I engaged to ourselves the vessel we sailed in."

"Where have you left your companions?"

"By this hour," answered Margrave, "they are in reach of my summons; and when you and I have achieved the discovery—in the results of which we shall share—I will exact no more from your aid. I trust all that rests for my cure to my nurse and her swarthy attendants. You will aid me now, as a matter of course; the physician whose counsel you needed to guide your own skill enjoins you to obey my whim—if whim you still call it; you will obey it, for on that whim rests your own sole hope of happiness—you, who can love; I love nothing but life. Has my frank narrative solved all the doubts that stood between you and me, in the great meeting-ground of an interest in common?"

"Solved all the doubts! Your wild story but makes some the darker, leaving others untouched: the occult powers of which you boast, and some of which I have witnessed—your very insight into my own household sorrows, into the interest I have, with yourself, in the truth of a faith so repugnant to reason—"

"Pardon me," interrupted Margrave, with that slight curve of the lip which is half-smile and half-sneer, "if, in my account of myself, I omitted what I cannot explain, and you cannot conceive: let me first ask how many of the commonest actions of the commonest men are purely involuntary and wholly inexplicable? When, for instance, you open your lips and utter a sentence, you have not the faintest idea beforehand what word will follow another; when you move a muscle, can you tell me

the thought that prompts to the movement? And, wholly unable thus to account for your own simple sympathies between impluse and act, do you believe that there exists a man upon earth who can read all the riddles in the heart and brain of another? Is it not true that not one drop of water, one atom of matter, ever really touches another? Between each and each there is always a space, however infinitesimally small. How, then, could the world go on, if every man asked another to make his whole history and being as lucid as daylight before he would buy and sell with him? All interchange and alliance rest but on this—an interest in common. You and I have established that interest; all else, all you ask more, is superfluous. Could I answer each doubt you would raise, still, whether the answer should please or revolt you, your reason would come back to the same starting-point, viz., In one definite proposal have we two an interest in common?"

And again Margrave laughed, not in mirth, but in mockery. The laugh and the words that preceded it were not the laugh and the words of the young. Could it be possible that Louis Grayle had indeed revived to false youth in the person of Margrave, such might have been his laugh and such his words. The whole mind of Margrave seemed to have undergone change since I last saw him; more rich in idea, more crafty even in candor, more powerful, more concentred. As we see in our ordinary experience, that some infirmity, threatening dissolution, brings forth more vividly the reminiscences of early years, when impressions were vigorously stamped, so I might have thought that, as Margrave neared the tomb, the memories he had retained from his former existence, in a being more amply endowed, more formidably potent, struggled back to the brain; and the mind that had lived in Louis Grayle moved the lips of the dying Margrave.

"For the powers and the arts that it equally puzzles your reason to assign or deny to me," resumed my terrible guest, "I will say briefly but this: they come from faculties stored within myself, and doubtless conduce to my self-preservation—faculties more or less, perhaps (so Van Helmont asserts), given to all men, though dormant in most; vivid and active in me because in me self-preservation has been and yet is the strong master-passion, or instinct; and because I have been taught how to use and direct such faculties by disciplined teachers—some by Louis Grayle, the enchanter; some by my nurse, the singer of charmed songs. But in much that I will to have done, I know no more than yourself how the agency

acts. Enough for me to will what I wish, and sink calmly into slumber, sure that the will would work somehow its way. But when I have willed to know what, when known, should shape my own courses, I could see, without aid from your pitiful telescopes, all objects howsoever far. What wonder in that? Have you no learned puzzle-brained metaphysicians, who tell you that space is but an idea, all this palpable universe an idea in the mind, and no more! Why am I an enigma as dark as the Sibyls, and your metaphysicians as plain as a hornbook?" Again the sardonic laugh. "Enough: let what I have said obscure or enlighten your guesses, we come back to the same link of union, which binds man to man, bids states arise from the desert, and foemen embrace as brothers. I need you and you need me; without your aid my life is doomed; without my secret the breath will have gone from the lips of your Lilian before the sun of to-morrow is red on yon hilltops."

"Fiend or juggler," I cried, in rage, "you shall not so enslave and enthrall me by this mystic farrago and jargon. Make your fantastic experiment on yourself if you will: trust to your arts and your powers. My Lilian's life shall not hang on your fiat. I trust it—to—"

"To what—to man's skill? Hear what the sage of the college shall tell you, before I ask you again for your aid. Do you trust to God's saving mercy? Ah! of course you believe in a God? Who, except a philosopher, can reason a Maker away? But that the Maker will alter His courses to hear you; that, whether or not you trust in Him, or in your doctor, it will change by a hairbreadth the thing that must be—do you believe *this*, Allen Fenwick?"

And there sat this reader of hearts! a boy in his aspect, mocking me and the graybeards of schools.

I could listen no more; I turned to the door and fled down the stairs, and heard, as I fled, a low chant: feeble and faint, it was still the old barbaric chant, by which the serpent is drawn from its hole by the charmer.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

To those of my readers who may seek with Julius Faber to explore, through intelligible causes, solutions of the marvels I narrate, Margrave's confession may serve to explain away much that my own superstitious beliefs had obscured. To them Margrave is evidently the son of Louis Grayle. The

elixir of life is reduced to some simple restorative, owing much of its effect to the faith of a credulous patient: youth is so soon restored to its joy in the sun, with or without an elixir. To them Margrave's arts of enchantment are reduced to those idiosyncrasies of temperament on which the disciples of Mesmer build up their theories; exaggerated, in much, by my own superstitions; aided, in part, by such natural, purely physical magic as, explored by the ancient priestcrafts, is despised by the modern philosophies, and only remains occult because Science delights no more in the slides of the lantern which fascinated her childhood with simulated phantoms. To them Margrave is, perhaps, an enthusiast but, because an enthusiast, not less an impostor. "*L'Homme se pique*," says Charron. Man cogs the dice for himself ere he rattles the box for his dupes. Was there ever successful impostor who did not commence by a fraud on his own understanding? Cradled in Orient Fable-land, what though Margrave believes in its legends; in a wand, an elixir; in sorcerers or Afrites? That belief in itself makes him keen to detect, and skilful to profit by, the latent but kindred credulities of others. In all illustrations of Duper and Duped through the records of superstition—from the guile of a Cromwell, a Mahomet, down to the cheats of a gipsy—professional visionaries are amongst the astutest observers. The knowledge that Margrave had gained of my abode, of my affliction, or of the innermost thoughts in my mind, it surely demanded no preternatural aids to acquire. An Old Bailey attorney could have got at the one, and any quick student of human hearts have readily mastered the other. In fine, Margrave, thus rationally criticised, is no other prodigy (save in degree and concurrence of attributes simple, though not very common) than may be found in each alley that harbors a fortune-teller who has just faith enough in the stars or the cards to bubble himself while he swindles his victims; earnest, indeed, in the self-conviction that he is really a seer, but reading the looks of his listeners, divining the thoughts that induce them to listen, and acquiring by practice a startling ability to judge what the listeners will deem it most seer-like to read in the cards or divine from the stars.

I leave this interpretation unassailed. It is that which is the most probable; it is clearly that which, in a case not my own, I should have accepted; and yet I revolved and dismissed it. The moment we deal with things beyond our comprehension, and in which our own senses are appealed to and baffled, we revolt from the Probable, as it seems to the senses of those

who have not experienced what we have. And the same principle of Wonder that led our philosophy up from inert ignorance into restless knowledge, now winding back into Shadowland, reverses its rule by the way, and, at last, leaves us lost in the maze, our knowledge inert, and our ignorance restless.

And putting aside all other reasons for hesitating to believe that Margrave was the son of Louis Grayle—reasons which his own narrative might suggest—was it not strange that Sir Philip Derval, who had instituted inquiries so minute, and reported them in his memoir with so faithful a care, should not have discovered that a youth, attended by the same woman who had attended Grayle, had disappeared from the town on the same night as Grayle himself disappeared? But Derval had related truthfully, according to Margrave's account, the flight of Ayesha and her Indian servant, yet not alluded to the flight, not even to the existence, of the boy, who must have been of no mean importance in the suite of Louis Grayle, if he were, indeed, the son whom Grayle had made his constant companion, and constituted his principal heir.

Not many minutes did I give myself up to the cloud of reflections through which no sunbeam of light forced its way. One thought overmastered all; Margrave had threatened death to my Lilian, and warned me of what I should learn from the lips of Faber, "the sage of the college." I stood, shuddering, at the door of my home; I did not dare to enter.

"Allen," said a voice, in which my ear detected an unwonted tremulous faltering, "be firm—be calm. I keep my promise. The hour is come in which you may again see the Lilian of old—mind to mind, soul to soul."

Faber's hand took mine, and led me into the house.

"You do, then, fear that this interview will be too much for her strength?" said I whisperingly.

"I cannot say; but she demands the interview, and I dare not refuse it."

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

I LEFT Faber on the stairs, and paused at the door of Lilian's room. The door opened suddenly, noiselessly, and her mother came out with one hand before her face, and the other locked in Amy's, who was leading her as a child leads the blind. Mrs. Ashleigh looked up, as I touched her, with a vacant, dreary stare. She was not weeping, as was her womanly wont in every pettier grief, but Amy was. No word was

exchanged between us. I entered, and closed the door; my eyes turned mechanically to the corner in which was placed the small virgin bed, with its curtains white as a shroud. Lilian was not there. I looked around, and saw her half-reclined on a couch near the window. She was dressed, and with care. Was not that her bridal robe?

"Allen—Allen," she murmured. "Again, again my Allen—again, again your Lilian!" And, striving in vain to rise, she stretched out her arms in the yearning of reunited love. And as I knelt beside her, those arms closed round me for the first time in the frank, chaste, holy tenderness of a wife's embrace.

"Ah!" she said, in her low voice (her voice, like Cordelia's, was ever low), "all has come back to me—all that I owe to your protecting, noble, trustful, guardian love!"

"Hush! hush! the gratitude rests with me—it is so sweet to love, to trust, to guard! my own, my beautiful—still my beautiful! Suffering has not dimmed the light of those dear eyes to me! Put your lips to my ear. Whisper but these words: 'I love you, and for your sake I wish to live'!"

"For your sake, I pray—with my whole weak, human heart—I pray to live! Listen. Some day hereafter, if I am spared, under the purple blossoms of yonder waving trees I shall tell you all, as I see it now; all that darkened or shone on me in my long dream, and before the dream closed around me, like a night in which cloud and star chase each other! Some day hereafter, some quiet, sunlit, happy, happy day. But now, all I would say is this: Before that dreadful morning." Here she paused, shuddered, and passionately burst forth—"Allen, Allen! you did not believe that slanderous letter! God bless you! God bless you! Great-hearted, high-souled—God bless you, my darling! my husband! And He will! Pray to him humbly as I do, and He will bless you." She stooped and kissed away my tears—then she resumed, feebly, meekly, sorrowfully:

"Before that morning I was not worthy of such a heart, such a love as yours. No, no; hear me. Not that a thought of love for another ever crossed me! Never, while conscious and reasoning, was I untrue to you, even in fancy But I was a child—wayward as the child who pines for what earth cannot give, and covets the moon for a toy. Heaven had been so kind to my lot on earth, and yet with my lot on earth I was secretly discontented. When I felt that you loved me, and my heart told me that I loved again, I said to myself, 'Now the void that my soul finds on earth will be filled.' I longed for

your coming, and yet when you went I murmured, 'But is this the ideal of which I had dreamed?' I asked for an impossible sympathy. Sympathy with what? Nay, smile on me, dearest!—sympathy with what? I could not have said. Ah! Allen, then, then, I was not worthy of you. Infant that I was, I asked you to understand me: now I know that I am a woman, and my task is to study you! Do I make myself clear? Do you forgive me? I was not untrue to you; I was untrue to my own duties in life. I believed, in my vain conceit, that a mortal's dim vision of heaven raised me above the earth; I did not perceive the truth that earth is a part of the same universe as heaven! Now, perhaps, in the awful affliction that darkened my reason, my soul has been made more clear. As if to chastise but to teach me, my soul has been permitted to indulge its own presumptuous desire; it has wandered forth from the trammels of mortal duties and destinies; it comes back, alarmed by the dangers of its own rash and presumptuous escape from the task which it should desire upon earth to perform. Allen, Allen, I am less unworthy of you now! Perhaps in my darkness one rapid glimpse of the true world of spirit has been vouchsafed to me. If so, how unlike to the visions my childhood indulged as divine! Now, while I know still more deeply that there is a world for the angels, I know, also, that the mortal must pass through probation in the world of mortals. Oh! may I pass through it with you—grieving in your griefs, rejoicing in your joys!"

Here language failed her. Again the dear arms embraced me, and the dear face, eloquent with love, hid itself on my human breast.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THAT interview is over! Again I am banished from Lilian's room; the agitation, the joy of that meeting has overstrained her enfeebled nerves. Convulsive tremblings of the whole frame, accompanied with vehement sobs, succeeded our brief interchange of sweet and bitter thoughts. Faber, in tearing me from her side, imperiously and sternly warned me that the sole chance yet left of preserving her life was in the merciful suspense of the emotions that my presence excited. He and Amy resumed their place in her chamber. Even her mother shared my sentence of banishment. So Mrs. Ashleigh and I sat facing each other in the room below; over me a leaden

stupor had fallen, and I heard, as a voice from afar or in a dream, the mother's murmured wailings:

"She will die—she will die! Her eyes have the same heavenly look as my Gilbert's on the day on which his closed forever. Her very words are his last words: 'Forgive me all my faults to you.' She will die—she will die!"

Hours thus passed away. At length, Faber entered the room; he spoke first to Mrs. Ashleigh—meaningless soothings, familiar to the lips of all who pass from the chamber of the dying to the presence of mourners, and know that it is a falsehood to say "hope," and a mockery as yet, to say, "endure."

But he led her away to her own room docile as a wearied child led to sleep, stayed with her some time, and then returned to me, pressing me to his breast father-like.

"No hope—no hope!" said I, recoiling from his embrace. "You are silent. Speak! speak! Let me know the worst."

"I have a hope, yet I scarcely dare to bid you share it; for it grows rather out of my heart as man, than my experience as physician. I cannot think that her soul would be now so reconciled to earth, so fondly, so earnestly cling to this mortal life, if it were about to be summoned away. You know how commonly even the sufferers who have dreaded death the most become calmly resigned to its coming, when death visibly reveals itself out from the shadows in which its shape has been guessed and not seen. As it is a bad sign for life when the patient has lost all will to live on, so there is hope while the patient, yet young and with no perceptible breach in the great centres of life (however violently their forts may be stormed), has still intense faith in recovery, perhaps drawn (who can say?)from the whispers conveyed from above to the soul.

"I cannot bring myself to think that all the uses for which a reason, always so lovely even in its errors, has been restored, are yet fulfilled. It seems to me as if your union, as yet so imperfect, has still for its end that holy life on earth by which two mortal beings strengthen each other for a sphere of existence to which this is the spiritual ladder. Through yourself I have hope yet for her. Gifted with powers that rank you high in the manifold orders of man; thoughtful, laborious, and brave; with a heart that makes intellect vibrate to every fine touch of humanity; in error itself, conscientious; in delusion, still eager for truth; in anger, for giving; in wrong, seeking how to repair; and, best of all, strong in a love which the mean would have shrunk to defend from the fangs of the slanderer—a love, raising passion itself out of the realm of the senses, made sublime

by the sorrows that tried its devotion—with all these noble proofs in yourself, of a being not meant to end here, your life has stopped short in its uses, your mind itself has been drifted, a bark without rudder or pilot, over seas without shore, under skies without stars. And wherefore? Because the Mind you so haughtily vaunted has refused its companion and teacher in Soul.

"And therefore, through you, I hope that she will be spared yet to live on—she, in whom soul has been led dimly astray, by unheeding the checks and the definite goals which the mind is ordained to prescribe to its wanderings while here; the mind taking thoughts from the actual and visible world, and the soul but vague glimpses and hints from the instinct of its ultimate heritage. Each of you two seems to me as yet incomplete, and your destinies yet uncompleted. Through the bonds of the heart, through the trials of time, ye have both to consummate your marriage. I do not—believe me—I do not say this in the fanciful wisdom of allegory and type, save that, wherever deeply examined, allegory and type run through all the most commonplace phases of outward and material life. I hope, then, that she may yet be spared to you; hope it, not from my skill as physician but my inward belief as a Christian. To perfect your own being and end, '*Ye will need one another*'!"

I started—the very words that Lilian had heard in her vision!

"But," resumed Faber, "how can I presume to trace the numberless links of effect up to the First Cause, far off—oh; far off—out of the scope of my reason. I leave that to philosophers, who would laugh my meek hope to scorn. Possibly, probably, where I, whose calling had been but to save flesh from the worm, deem that the life of your Lilian is needed yet, to develope and train your own convictions of soul, Heaven in its wisdom may see that her death would instruct you far more than her life. I have said: Be prepared for either; wisdom through joy, or wisdom through grief. Enough that, looking only through the mechanism by which this moral world is impelled and improved, you know that cruelty is impossible to wisdom. Even a man, or man's law, is never wise but when merciful. But mercy has general conditions; and that which is mercy to the myriads may seem hard to the one, and that which seems hard to the one in the pang of a moment may be mercy when viewed by the eye that looks on through eternity."

And from all this discourse—of which I now, at calm distance of time, recall every word—my human, loving heart bore

away for the moment but this sentence; "Ye will need one another"; so that I cried out: "Life, life, life! Is there no hope for her life? Have you no hope as physician? I am physician too; I will see her. I will judge. I will not be banished from my post."

"Judge, then, as physician, and let the responsibility rest with you. At this moment, all convulsion, all struggle, has ceased—the frame is at rest. Look on her, and perhaps only the physician's eye could distinguish her state from death. It is not sleep, it is not trance, it is not the dooming coma from which there is no awaking. Shall I call it by the name received in our schools? Is it the catalepsy in which life is suspended, but consciousness acute? She is motionless, rigid; it is but with a strain of my own sense that I know that the breath still breathes, and the heart still beats. But I am convinced that though she can neither speak, nor stir, nor give sign, she is fully, sensitively conscious of all that passes around her. She is like those who have seen the very coffin carried into their chamber, and been unable to cry out: 'Do not bury me alive!' Judge then for yourself, with this intense consciousness and this impotence to evince it, what might be the effect of your presence—first an agony of despair, and then the complete extinction of life!"

"I have known but one such case—a mother whose heart was wrapped up in a suffering infant. She had lain for two days and two nights, still, as if in her shroud. All, save myself, said: 'Life is gone.' I said: 'Life still is there.' They brought in the infant, to try what effect its presence would produce; then her lips moved, and the hands crossed upon her bosom trembled."

"And the result?" exclaimed Faber eagerly. "If the result of your experience sanction your presence, come; the sight of the babe rekindled life?"

"No; extinguished its last spark! I will not enter Lilian's room. I will go away—away from the house itself. That acute consciousness! I know it well! She may even hear me move in the room below, hear me speak at this moment. Go back to her, go back! But if hers be the state which I have known in another, which may be yet more familiar to persons of far ampler experience than mine, there is no immediate danger of death. The state will last through to-day, through to-night, perhaps for days to come. Is it so?"

"I believe that for at least twelve hours there will be no change in her state. I believe also that if she recover from it,

calm and refreshed, as from a sleep, the danger of death will have passed away."

"And for twelve hours my presence would be hurtful?"

"Rather say fatal, if my diagnosis be right."

I wrung my friend's hand, and we parted.

Oh! to lose her now! now that her love and her reason had both returned, each more vivid than before! Futile, indeed, might be Margrave's boasted secret; but at least in that secret was hope. In recognized science I saw only despair.

And, at that thought, all dread of this mysterious visitor vanished—all anxiety to question more of his attributes or his history. His life itself became to me dear and precious. What if it should fail me in the steps of the process, whatever that was, by which the life of my Lilian might be saved!

The shades of evening were now closing in. I remembered that I had left Margrave without even food for many hours. I stole round to the back of the house, filled a basket with ailments more generous than those of the former day; extracted fresh drugs from my store, and, thus laden, hurried back to the hut. I found Margrave in the room below, seated on his mysterious coffer, leaning his face on his hand. When I entered, he looked up, and said:

"You have neglected me. My strength is waning. Give me more of the cordial, for we have work before us to-night, and I need support."

He took for granted my assent to his wild experiment; and he was right.

I administered the cordial. I placed food before him, and this time he did not eat with repugnance. I poured out wine, and he drank it sparingly, but with ready compliance, saying: "In perfect health, I looked upon wine as poison; now it is like a foretaste of the glorious elixir."

After he had thus recruited himself, he seemed to acquire an energy that startlingly contrasted his languor the day before; the effort of breathing was scarcely perceptible; the color came back to his cheeks; his bended frame rose elastic and erect.

"If I understood you rightly," said I, "the experiment you ask me to aid can be accomplished in a single night?"

"In a single night—this night."

"Comamnd me. Why not begin at once? What apparatus or chemical agencies do you need?"

"Ah!" said Margrave. "Formerly, how I was misled! Formerly, how my conjectures blundered! I thought, when I asked you to give a month to the experiment I wish to make,

that I should need the subtlest skill of the chemist. I then believed, with Van Helmont, that the principle of life is a gas, and that the secret was but in the mode by which the gas might be rightly administered. But now, all that I need is contained in this coffer, save one very simple material—fuel sufficient for a steady fire for six hours. I see even that is at hand, piled up in your outhouse. And now for the substance itself—to that you must guide me."

"Explain."

"Near this very spot is there not gold—in mines yet undiscovered?—and gold of the purest metal?"

"There is. What then? Do you, with the alchemists, blend in one discovery—gold and life?"

"No. But it is only where the chemistry of earth or of man produces gold, that the substance from which the great pabulum of life is extracted by ferment can be found. Possibly, in the attempts at that transmutation of metals, which I think your own great chemist, Sir Humphry Davy, allowed might be possible, but held not to be worth the cost of the process—possibly, in those attempts, some scanty grains of this substance were found by the alchemists, in the crucible, with grains of the metal as niggardly yielded by pitiful mimicry of Nature's stupendous laboratory; and from such grains enough of the essence might, perhaps, have been drawn forth, to add a few years of existence to some feeble graybeard,—granting, what rests on no proofs, that some of the alchemists reached an age rarely given to man. But it is not in the miserly crucible, it is in the matrix of Nature herself, that we must seek in prolific abundance Nature's grand principle—life. As the loadstone is rife with the magnetic virtue; as amber contains the electric; so in this substance, to which we yet want a name, is found the bright life-giving fluid. In the old gold-mines of Asia and Europe the substance exists, but can rarely be met with. The soil for its nutriment may there be well-nigh exhausted. It is here, where Nature herself is all vital with youth, that the nutriment of youth must be sought. Near this spot is gold—guide me to it."

"You cannot come with me. The place which I know as auriferous is some miles distant—the way rugged. You cannot walk to it. It is true I have horses, but—"

"Do you think I have come this distance, and not foreseen and forestalled all that I want for my object? Trouble yourself not with conjectures how I can arrive at the place. I have provided the means to arrive at and leave it. My litter and its

bearers are in reach of my call. Give me your arm to the rising ground, fifty yards from your door."

I obeyed mechanically, stifling all surprise. I had made my resolve, and admitted no thought that could shake it.

When we reached the summit of the grassy hillock which sloped from the road that led to the seaport, Margrave, after pausing to recover breath, lifted up his voice in a key not loud, but shrill, and slow, and prolonged, half-cry and half-chant, like the night-hawk's. Through that air—so limpid and still, bringing near far objects, far sounds—the voice pierced its way, artfully pausing, till wave after wave of the atmosphere bore and transmitted it on.

In a few minutes the call seemed re-echoed, so exactly, so cheerily, that for the moment I thought that the note was the mimicry of the shy mocking Lyre-Bird, which mimics so merrily all that it hears in its coverts, from the whirr of the locust to the howl of the wild dog.

"What king," said the mystical charmer, and as he spoke he carelessly rested his hand on my shoulder, so that I trembled to feel that this dread son of Nature, Godless and soulless, who had been—and, my heart whispered, who still could be—my bane and mind-darkener, leant upon me for support, as the spoilt younger-born on his brother; "What king," said this cynical mocker, with his beautiful boyish face; "What king in your civilized Europe has the sway of a chief of the East? What link is so strong between mortal and mortal, as that between lord and slave? I transport yon poor fools from the land of their birth; they preserve here their old habits—obedience and awe. They would wait till they starved in the solitude—wait to hearken and answer my call. And I who thus rule them, or charm them—I use and despise them. They know that, and yet serve me! Between you and me, my philosopher, there is but one thing worth living for—life for oneself."

Is it age, is it youth, that thus shocks all my sense, in my solemn completeness of man? Perhaps, in great capitals, young men of pleasure will answer: "It is youth; and we think what he says!" Young friends, I do not believe you.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Along the grass-track I saw now, under the moon, just risen, a strange procession—never seen before in Australian

pastures. It moved on, noiselessly but quickly. We descended the hillock, and met it on the way; a sable litter, borne by four men, in unfamiliar Eastern garments; two other swarthy servitors, more bravely dressed, with yataghans and silver-hilted pistols in their belts, preceding this sombre equipage. Perhaps Margrave divined the disdainful thought that passed through my mind, vaguely and half-consciously; for he said, with the hollow, bitter laugh that had replaced the lively peal of his once melodious mirth:

"A little leisure and a little gold, and your raw colonist, too, will have the tastes of a pacha."

I made no answer. I had ceased to care who and what was my tempter. To me his whole being was resolved into one problem: Had he a secret by which Death could be turned from Lilian?

But now as, the litter halted, from the long dark shadow which it cast upon the turf, the figure of a woman emerged and stood before us. The outlines of her shape were lost in the loose folds of a black mantle, and the features of her face were hidden by a black veil, except only the dark-bright, solemn eyes. Her stature was lofty, her bearing majestic, whether in movement or repose.

Margrave accosted her in some language unknown to me. She replied in what seemed to my ear the same tongue. The tones of her voice were sweet, but inexpressibly mournful. The words that they uttered appeared intended to warn, or depreciate, or dissuade; for they called to Margrave's brow a lowering frown, and drew from his lips a burst of unmistakable anger. The woman rejoined, in the same melancholy music of voice. And Margrave then, leaning his arm upon her shoulder as he had leant it on mine, drew her away from the group into a neighboring copse of the flowering eucalypti—mystic trees, never changing the hues of their pale-green leaves, ever shifting the tints of their ash-gray, shedding bark. For some moments, I gazed on the two human forms, dimly seen by the glinting moonlight through the gaps in the foliage. Then, turning away my eyes, I saw, standing close at my side, a man whom I had not noticed before. His footstep, as it stole to me, had fallen on the sward without sound. His dress, though Oriental, differed from that of his companions, both in shape and color; fitting close to the breast, leaving the arms bare to the elbow, and of an uniform ghastly white, as are the cerements of the grave. His visage was even darker than those of the Syrians or Arabs behind him, and his features were those

of a bird of prey—the beak of the eagle, but the eye of the vulture. His cheeks were hollow; the arms, crossed on his breast, were long and fleshless. Yet in that skeleton form there was a something which conveyed the idea of a serpent's suppleness and strength; and as the hungry, watchful eyes met my own startled gaze, I recoiled impulsively, with that inward warning of danger which is conveyed to man, as to inferior animals, in the very aspect of the creatures that sting or devour. At my movement the man inclined his head in the submissive Eastern salutation, and spoke in his foreign tongue, softly, humbly, fawningly, to judge by his tone and his gesture.

I moved yet farther away from him with loathing, and now the human thought flashed upon me: was I, in truth, exposed to no danger in trusting myself to the mercy of the weird and remorseless master of those hirelings from the East: seven men in number, two at least of them formidably armed, and docile as bloodhounds to the hunter, who has only to show them their prey? But fear of man like myself is not my weakness; where fear found its way to my heart, it was through the doubts or the fancies in which man like myself disappeared in the attributes, dark and unknown, which we give to a fiend or a spectre. And, perhaps, if I could have paused to analyze my own sensations, the very presence of this escort—creatures of flesh and blood—lessened the dread of my incomprehensible tempter. Rather, a hundred times, front and defy those seven Eastern slaves—I, haughty son of the Anglo-Saxon who conquers all races because he fears no odds—than have seen again, on the walls of my threshold, the luminous, bodiless Shadow! Besides: Lilian—Lilian! for one chance of saving her life, however wild and chimerical that chance might be, I would have shrunk not a foot from the march of an army.

Thus reassured and thus resolved, I advanced, with a smile of disdain, to meet Margrave and his veiled companion, as they now came from the moonlit copse.

"Well" I said to him, with an irony that unconsciously mimicked his own, "have you taken advice with your nurse? I assume that the dark form by your side is that of Ayesha!"

The woman looked at me from her sable veil, with her steadfast solemn eye, and said, in English, though with a foreign accent: "The nurse born in Asia is but wise through her love; the pale son of Europe is wise through his art. The nurse says, 'Forbear!' Do you say, 'Adventure'?"

"Peace!" exclaimed Margrave, stamping his foot on the

ground. "I take no counsel from either; it is for me to resolve, for you to obey, and for him to aid. Night is come, and we waste it; move on."

The woman made no reply, nor did I. He took my arm and walked back to the hut. The barbaric escort followed. When we reached the door of the building, Margrave said a few words to the woman and to the litter-bearers. They entered the hut with us. Margrave pointed out to the woman his coffer; to the men the fuel stowed in the outhouse. Both were born away and placed within the litter. Meanwhile I took from the table, on which it was carelessly thrown, the light hatchet that I habitually carried with me in my rambles.

"Do you think that you need that idle weapon?" said Margrave. "Do you fear the good faith of my swarthy attendants?"

"Nay, take the hatchet yourself; its use is to sever the gold from the quartz in which we may find it imbedded, or to clear, as this shovel, which will also be needed, from the slight soil above it, the ore that the mine in the mountain flings forth, as the sea casts its waifs on the sands."

"Give me your hand, fellow-laborer!" said Margrave joyfully. "Ah, there is no faltering terror in this pulse! I was not mistaken in the Man. What rests, but the Place and the Hour? I shall live—I shall live!"

CHAPTER LXXXI.

MARGRAVE now entered the litter, and the Veiled Woman drew the black curtains round him. I walked on, as the guide, some yards in advance. The air was still, heavy, and parched with the breath of the Australian sirocco.

We passed through the meadow-land, studded with slumbering flocks; we followed the branch of the creek, which was linked to its source in the mountains by many a trickling waterfall; we threaded the gloom of stunted, misshapen trees, gnarled with the stringy bark which makes one of the signs of the strata that nourish gold; and at length the moon, now in all her pomp of light, mid-heaven amongst her subject stars, gleamed through the fissures of the cave, on whose floor lay the relics of antediluvian races, and rested in one flood of silvery splendor upon the hollows of the extinct volcano, with tufts of dank herbage, and wide spaces of paler sward, covering the gold below—Gold, the dumb symbol of organized Matter's great mystery, storing in itself, according as Mind, the

informer of Matter, can distinguish its uses, evil and good, bane and blessing.

Hitherto the Veiled Woman had remained in the rear, with the white-robed skeleton-like image that had crept to my side unawares with its noiseless step. Thus, in each winding turn of the difficult path at which the convoy following behind me came into sight, I had seen, first, the two gayly dressed armed men, next the black bier-like litter, and last the Black-veiled Woman and the White-robed Skeleton.

But now, as I halted on the table-land, backed by the mountain and fronting the valley, the woman left her companion, passed by the litter and the armed men, and paused by my side, at the mouth of the moonlit cavern.

There for a moment she stood, silent, the procession below mounting upward laboriously and slow; then she turned to me, and her veil was withdrawn.

The face on which I gazed was wondrously beautiful, and severely awful. There, was neither youth nor age, but beauty, mature and majestic as that of a marble Demeter.

"Do you believe in that which you seek?" she asked, in her foreign, melodious, melancholy accents.

"I have no belief," was my answer. "True science has none. True science questions all things, takes nothing upon credit. It knows but three states of the mind—Denial, Conviction, and that vast interval between the two, which is not belief, but suspense of judgment."

The woman let fall her veil, moved from me, and seated herself on a crag above that cleft between mountain and creek, to which, when I had first discovered the gold that the land nourished, the rain from the clouds had given the rushing life of the cataract; but which now, in the drought and the hush of the skies, was but a dead pile of stones.

The litter now ascended the height: its bearers halted; a lean hand tore the curtains aside, and Margrave descended, leaning, this time, not on the Black-veiled Woman, but on the White-robed Skeleton.

There, as he stood, the moon shone full on his wasted form; on his face, resolute, cheerful, and proud, despite its hollowed outlines and sicklied hues. He raised his head, spoke in the language unknown to me, and the armed men and the litter-bearers grouped round him, bending low, their eyes fixed on the ground. The Veiled Woman rose slowly and came to his side, motioning away, with a mute sign, the ghastly form on which he leant, and passing round him silently, instead, her

own sustaining arm. Margrave spoke again a few sentences of which I could not even guess the meaning. When he had concluded, the armed men and the litter-bearers came nearer to his feet, knelt down, and kissed his hand. They then rose, and took from the bier-like vehicle the coffer and the fuel. This done, they lifted again the litter, and again, preceded by the armed men, the procession descended down the sloping hillside, down into the valley below.

Margrave now whispered, for some moments, into the ear of the hideous creature who had made way for the Veiled Woman. The grim skeleton bowed his head submissively, and strode noiselessly away through the long grasses; the slender stems, trampled under his stealthy feet, relifting themselves, as after a passing wind. And thus he, too, sank out of sight down into the valley below. On the table-land of the hill remained only we three—Margrave, myself, and the Veiled Woman.

She had reseated herself apart, on the gray crag above the dried torrent. He stood at the entrance of the cavern, round the sides of which clustered parasital plants, with flowers of all colors, some amongst them opening their petals and exhaling their fragrance only in the hours of night; so that, as his form filled up the jaws of the dull arch, obscuring the moon-beam that strove to pierce the shadows that slept within, it stood now—wan and blighted—as I had seen it, first, radiant and joyous, literally "framed in blooms."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

"So," said Margrave, turning to me, "under the soil that spreads around us, lies the gold which to you and to me is at this moment of no value, except as a guide to its twin-born—the regenerator of life!"

"You have not yet described to me the nature of the substance which we are to explore, nor of the process by which the virtues you impute to it are to be extracted."

"Let us first find the gold, and instead of describing the life-amber, so let me call it, I will point it out to your own eyes. As to the process, your share in it is so simple, that you will ask me why I seek aid from a chemist. The life-amber, when found, has but to be subjected to heat and fermentation for six hours; it will be placed, in a small cauldron which that coffer contains, over the fire which that fuel will feed. To give effect to the process, certain alkalies and other ingredi-

ents are required. But these are prepared, and mine is the task to commingle them. From your science as chemist I need and ask nought. In you I have sought only the aid of a man."

"If that be so, why, indeed, seek me at all? Why not confide in those swarthy attendants, who doubtless are slaves to your orders?"

"Confide in slaves! When the first task enjoined to them would be to discover, and refrain from purloining, gold. Seven such unscrupulous knaves, or even one such, and I, thus defenceless and feeble! Such is not the work that wise masters confide to fierce slaves. But that is the least of the reasons which exclude them from my choice, and fix my choice of assistant on you. Do you forget what I told you of the danger which the Dervish declared no bribe I could offer could tempt him a second time to brave?"

"I remember now; those words had passed away from my mind."

"And because they had passed away from your mind, I chose you for my comrade. I need a man by whom danger is scorned."

"But in the process of which you tell me I see no possible danger, unless the ingredients you mix in your cauldron have poisonous fumes."

"It is not that. The ingredients I use are not poisons."

"What other danger, except you dread your own Eastern slaves? But, if so, why lead them to these solitudes?—and if so, why not bid me be armed?"

"The Eastern slaves, fulfilling my commands, wait for my summons, where their eyes cannot see what we do. The danger is of a kind in which the boldest son of the East would be more craven, perhaps, than the daintiest Sybarite of Europe, who would shrink from a panther and laugh at a ghost. In the creed of the Dervish, and of all who adventure into that realm of nature which is closed to philosophy and open to magic, there are races in the magnitude of space unseen as animalcules in the world of a drop. For the tribes of the drop, science has its microscope. Of the hosts of yon azure Infinite magic gains sight, and through them gains command over fluid conductors that link all the parts of creation. Of these races, some are wholly indifferent to man, some benign to him, and some dreadly hostile. In all the regular and prescribed conditions of mortal being, this magic realm seems as blank and tenantless as yon vacant air. But when a seeker of powers beyond the rude functions by which man plies the clockwork

that measures his hours, and stops when its chain reaches the end of its coil, strives to pass over those boundaries at which philosophy says, 'Knowledge ends,' then he is like all other travellers in regions unknown; he must propitiate or brave the tribes that are hostile—must depend for his life on the tribes that are friendly. Though your science discredits the alchemist's dogmas, your learning informs you that all alchemists were not ignorant impostors; yet those whose discoveries prove them to have been the nearest allies to your practical knowledge, ever hint in their mystical work at the reality of that realm which is open to magic—ever hint that some means less familiar than furnace and bellows are essential to him who explores the elixir of life. He who once quaffs that elixir obtains in his very veins the bright fluid by which he transmits the force of his will to agencies dormant in nature, to giants unseen in the space. And here, as he passes the boundary which divides his allotted and normal mortality from the regions and races that magic alone can explore, so, here, he breaks down the safeguard between himself and the tribes that are hostile. Is it not ever thus between man and man? Let a race most gentle and timid and civilized dwell on one side a river or mountain, and another have home in the region beyond, each, if it pass not the intervening barrier, may with each live in peace. But if ambitious adventurers scale the mountain, or cross the river, with design to subdue and enslave the populations they boldly invade, then all the invaded arise in wrath and defiance—the neighbors are changed into foes. And therefore this process, by which a simple though rare material of nature is made to yield to a mortal the boon of a life which brings, with its glorious resistance to Time, desires and faculties to subject to its service beings that dwell in the earth, and the air, and the deep, has ever been one of the same peril which an invader must brave when he crosses the bounds of his nation. By this key alone you unlock all the cells of the alchemist's lore; by this alone understand how a labor, which a chemist's crudest apprentice could perform, has baffled the giant fathers of all your dwarfed children of science. Nature, that stores this priceless boon, seems to shrink from conceding it to man; the invisible tribes that abhor him oppose themselves to the gain that might give them a master. The duller of those who were the life-seekers of old would have told you how some chance, trivial, unlooked-for, foiled their grand hope at the very point of fruition; some doltish mistake, some improvident oversight, a defect in the sulphur, a wild overflow in

the quicksilver, or a flaw in the bellows, or a pupil who failed to replenish the fuel, by falling asleep by the furnace. The invisible foes seldom vouchsafe to make themselves visible where they can frustrate the bungler, as they mock at his toils from their ambush. But, the mightier adventurers, equally foiled in despite of their patience and skill, would have said: 'Not with us rests the fault; we neglected no caution, we failed from no oversight. But out from the cauldron dread faces arose, and the spectres or demons dismayed and baffled us.' Such, then, is the danger which seems so appalling to a son of the East, as it seemed to a seer in the dark age of Europe. But we can deride all its threats, you and I. For myself, I own frankly I take all the safety that the charms and resources of magic bestow. You, for your safety, have the cultured and disciplined reason which reduces all phantasies to nervous impressions; and I rely on the courage of one who has questioned, unquailing, the Luminous Shadow, and wrested from the hand of the magician himself the wand which concentred the wonders of will!"

To this strange and long discourse I listened without interruption, and now quietly answered:

"I do not merit the trust you affect in my courage; but I am now on my guard against the cheats of the fancy, and the fumes of a vapor can scarcely bewilder the brain in the open air of this mountain-land. I believe in no races like those which you tell me lie viewless in space, as do gases. I believe not in magic; I ask not its aids, and I dread not its terrors. For the rest, I am confident of one mournful courage—the courage that comes from despair. I submit to your guidance whatever it be, as a sufferer whom colleges doom to the grave submits to the quack who says, 'Take my specific and live!' My life is nought in itself; my life lives in another. You and I are both brave from despair; you would turn death from yourself, I would turn death from one I love more than myself. Both know how little aid we can win from the colleges, and both, therefore, turn to the promises most audaciously cheering: Dervish or magician, alchemist or phantom, what care you and I? And if they fail us, what then? They cannot fail us more than the colleges do!"

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE gold has been gained with an easy labor. I knew where to seek for it, whether under the turf or in the bed of

the creek. But Margrave's eyes, hungrily gazing round every spot from which the ore was disburied, could not detect the substance of which he alone knew the outward appearance. I had begun to believe that, even in the description given to him of this material, he had been credulously duped, and that no such material existed; when, coming back from the bed of the watercourse, I saw a faint yellow gleam amidst the roots of a giant parasite plant, the leaves and blossoms of which climbed up the sides of the cave with its antediluvian relics. The gleam was the gleam of gold, and on removing the loose earth round the roots of the plant, we came on—No, I will not, I dare not, describe it. The gold-digger would cast it aside, the naturalist would pause not to heed it; and did I describe it, and chemistry deign to subject it to analysis, could chemistry alone detach or discover its boasted virtues?

Its particles, indeed, are very minute, not seeming readily to crystallize with each other; each in itself of uniform shape and size, spherical as the egg which contains the germ of life, and small as the egg from which the life of an insect may quicken.

But Margrave's keen eye caught sight of the atoms upcast by the light of the moon. He exclaimed to me, "Found! I shall live!" And then, as he gathered up the grains with tremulous hands, he called out to the Veiled Woman, hitherto still seated motionless on the crag. At his word she rose and went to the place hard by, where the fuel was piled, busying herself there. I had no leisure to heed her. I continued my search in the soft and yielding soil that time and the decay of vegetable life had accumulated over the Pre-Adamite strata on which the arch of the cave rested its mighty keystone.

When we had collected of these particles about thrice as much as a man might hold in his hand, we seemed to have exhausted their bed. We continued still to find gold, but no more of the delicate substance, to which, in our sight, gold was as dross.

"Enough," then said Margrave, reluctantly desisting. "What we have gained already will suffice for a life thrice as long as legend attributes to Haroun. I shall live—I shall live through the centuries."

"Forget not that I claim my share."

"Your share—yours! True—your half of my life! It is true." He paused with a low, ironical, malignant laugh; and then added, as he rose and turned away: "But the work is yet to be done."

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

While we had thus labored and found, Ayesha had placed the fuel where the moonlight fell fullest on the sward of the table-land—a part of it already piled as for a fire, the rest of it heaped confusedly close at hand; and by the pile she had placed the coffer. And there she stood, her arms folded under her mantle, her dark image seeming darker still as the moonlight whitened all the ground from which the image rose motionless. Margrave opened his coffer; the Veiled Woman did not aid him, and I watched in silence, while he as silently made his weird and wizard-like preparations.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

On the ground a wide circle was traced by a small rod, tipped apparently with sponge saturated with some combustible naphtha-like fluid, so that a pale lambent flame followed the course of the rod as Margrave guided it, burning up the herbage over which it played, and leaving a distinct ring, like that which, in our lovely native fable-talk, we call the "Fairy's Ring," but yet more visible because marked in phosphorescent light. On the ring thus formed were placed twelve small lamps, fed with the fluid from the same vessel, and lighted by the same rod. The light emitted by the lamps was more vivid and brilliant than that which circled round the ring.

Within the circumference, and immediately round the wood-pile, Margrave traced certain geometrical figures, in which—not without a shudder, that I overcame at once by a strong effort of will in murmuring to myself the name of "Lilian"—I recognized the interlaced triangles which my own hand, in the spell enforced on a sleep-walker, had described on the floor of the wizard's pavilion. The figures were traced, like the circle, in flame, and at the point of each triangle (four in number) was placed a lamp, brilliant as those on the ring. This task performed, the cauldron, based on an iron tripod, was placed on the wood-pile. And then the woman, before inactive and unheeding, slowly advanced, knelt by the pile and lighted it. The dry wood crackled and the flame burst forth, licking the rims of the cauldron with tongues of fire.

Margrave flung into the cauldron the particles we had collected, poured over them first a liquid, colorless as water, from

the largest of the vessels drawn from his coffer, and then, more sparingly, drops from small crystal phials, like the phials I had seen in the hand of Philip Derval.

Having surmounted my first impulse of awe, I watched these proceedings, curious yet disdainful, as one who watches the mummeries of an enchanter on the stage.

"If," thought I, "these are but artful devices to inebriate and fool my own imagination, my imagination is on its guard, and reason shall not, this time, sleep at her post!"

"And now," said Margrave, "I consign to you the easy task by which you are to merit your share of the elixir. It is my task to feed and replenish the cauldron; it is Ayesha's to heed the fire, which must not for a moment relax in its measured and steady heat. Your task is the lightest of all: it is but to renew from this vessel the fluid that burns in the lamps, and on the ring. Observe, the contents of the vessel must be thriftily husbanded; there is enough, but not more than enough, to sustain the light in the lamps, on the lines traced round the cauldron, and on the farther ring, for six hours. The compounds dissolved in this fluid are scarce—only obtainable in the East, and even in the East months might have passed before I could have increased my supply. I had no months to waste. Replenish, then, the light only when it begins to flicker or fade. Take heed, above all, that no part of the outer ring—no, not an inch—and no lamp of the twelve, that are to its zodiac like stars, fade for one moment in darkness."

I took the crystal vessel from his hand.

"The vessel is small," said I, "and what is yet left of its contents is but scanty; whether its drops suffice to replenish the lights I cannot guess—I can but obey your instructions. But, more important by far than the light to the lamps and the circle, which in Asia or Africa might scare away the wild beasts unknown to this land—more important than light to a lamp, is the strength to your frame, weak magician! What will support you through six weary hours of night-watch?"

"Hope," answered Margrave, with a ray of his old dazzling style. "Hope! I shall live—I shall live through the centuries."

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

One hour passed away; the fagots under the cauldron burned clear in the sullen, sultry air. The materials within began to

seethe, and their color, at first dull and turbid, changed into a pale-rose hue; from time to time the Veiled Woman replenished the fire, after she had done so reseating herself close by the pyre, with her head bowed over her knees, and her face hid under her veil.

The lights in the lamps and along the ring and the triangles now began to pale. I resupplied their nutriment from the crystal vessel. As yet nothing strange startled my eye or my ear beyond the rim of the circle. Nothing audible, save, at a distance, the musical wheel-like click of the locusts, and, farther still in the forest, the howl of the wild dogs that never bark. Nothing visible, but the trees and the mountain-range girding the plains silvered by the moon, and the arch of the cavern, the flush of wild blooms on its sides, and the gleam of dry bones on its floor, where the moonlight shot into the gloom.

The second hour passed like the first. I had taken my stand by the side of Margrave, watching with him the process at work in the cauldron, when I felt the ground slightly vibrate beneath my feet, and, looking up, it seemed as if all the plains beyond the circle were heaving like the swell of the sea, and as if in the air itself there was a perceptible tremor.

I placed my hand on Margrave's shoulder and whispered: "To me earth and air seem to vibrate. Do they seem to vibrate to you?"

"I know not, I care not," he answered impetuously. "The essence is bursting the shell that confined it. Here are my air and my earth! Trouble me not. Look to the circle—feed the lamps if they fail."

I passed by the Veiled Woman as I walked towards a place in the ring in which the flame was waning dim. And I whispered to her the same question which I had whispered to Margrave. She looked slowly around and answered: "So is it before the Invisible make themselves visible! Did I not bid him forbear?" Her head again dropped on her breast, and her watch was again fixed on the fire.

I advanced to the circle and stooped to replenish the light where it waned. As I did so, on my arm, which stretched somewhat beyond the line of the ring, I felt a shock like that of electricity. The arm fell to my side numbed and nerveless, and from my hand dropped, but within the ring, the vessel that contained the fluid. Recovering my surprise or my stun, hastily with the other hand I caught up the vessel, but some of the scanty liquid was already spilled on the sward; and I saw with a thrill of dismay, that contrasted indeed the tranquil in-

difference with which I had first undertaken my charge, how small a supply was now left.

I went back to Margrave, and told him of the shock, and of its consequence in the waste of the liquid.

"Beware," said he, "that not a motion of the arm, not an inch of the foot, pass the verge of the ring; and if the fluid be thus unhappily stinted, reserve all that is left for the protecting circle and the twelve outer lamps! See how the Grand Work advances! How the hues in the cauldron are glowing blood-red through the film on the surface!"

And now four hours of the six were gone; my arm had gradually recovered its strength. Neither the ring nor the lamps had again required replenishing; perhaps their light was exhausted less quickly, as it was no longer to be exposed to the rays of the intense Australian moon. Clouds had gathered over the sky, and though the moon gleamed at times in the gaps that they left in blue air, her beam was more hazy and dulled. The locusts no longer were heard in the grass, nor the howl of the dogs in the forest. Out of the circle, the stillness was profound.

And about this time I saw distinctly in the distance a vast Eye! It drew nearer and nearer, seeming to move from the ground at the height of some lofty giant. Its gaze riveted mine; my blood curdled in the blaze from its angry ball; and now as it advanced larger and larger, other Eyes, as if of giants in its train, grew out from the space in its rear; numbers on numbers, like the spear-heads of some Eastern army, seen afar by pale warders of battlements doomed to the dust. My voice long refused an utterance to my awe; at length it burst forth shrill and loud:

"Look—look! Those terrible Eyes! Legions on legions. And hark! that tramp of numberless feet! *they* are not seen, but the hollows of earth echo the sound of their march!"

Margrave, more than ever intent on the cauldron, in which, from time to time, too, he kept dropping powders or essences drawn forth from his coffer, looked up, defyingly, fiercely:

"Ye come," he said, in a low mutter, his once mighty voice sounding hollow and laboring, but fearless and firm—"ye come—not to conquer, vain rebels!—ye whose dark chief I struck down at my feet in the tomb where my spell had raised up the ghost of your first human master, the Chaldee! Earth and air have their armies still faithful to me, and still I remember the war-song that summons them up to confront you! Ayesha—Ayesha! recall the wild troth that we pledged

amongst roses; recall the dread bond by which we united our sway over hosts that yet own thee as queen, though my sceptre is broken, my diadem reft from my brows!"

The Veiled Woman rose at this adjuration. Her veil was now withdrawn, and the blaze of the fire between Margrave and herself flushed, as with the rosy bloom of youth, the grand beauty of her softened face. It was seen, detached as it were, from her dark-mantled form; seen through the mist of the vapors which rose from the cauldron, framing it round like the clouds that are yieldingly pierced by the light of the evening star.

Through the haze of the vapor came her voice, more musical, more plaintive than I had heard it before, but far softer, more tender; still in her foreign tongue; the words unknown to me, and yet their sense, perhaps, made intelligible by the love, which has one common language and one common look to all who have loved—the love unmistakably heard in the loving tone, unmistakably seen in the loving face.

A moment or so more, and she had come round from the opposite side of the fire-pile, and bending over Margrave's upturned brow, kissed it quietly, solemnly; and then her countenance grew fierce, her crest rose erect; it was the lioness protecting her young. She stretched forth her arm from the black mantle, athwart the pale front that now again bent over the cauldron; stretched it towards the haunted and hollow-sounding space beyond, in the gesture of one whose right hand has the sway of the sceptre. And then her voice stole on the air in the music of a chant, not loud yet far-reaching; so thrilling, so sweet, and yet so solemn, that I could at once comprehend how legend united of old the spell of enchantment with the power of song. All that I recalled of the effects which, in the former time, Margrave's strange chants had produced on the ear that they ravished and the thoughts they confused, was but as the wild bird's imitative carol, compared to the depth, and the art, and the soul of the singer, whose voice seemed endowed with a charm to enthrall all the tribes of creation, though the language it used for that charm might to them, as to me, be unknown. As the song ceased, I heard, from behind, sounds like those I had heard in the spaces before me; the tramp of invisible feet, the whirr of invisible wings, as if armies were marching to aid against armies in march to destroy.

"Look not in front nor around," said Ayesha. "Look, like him, on the cauldron below. The circle and the lamps are yet bright; I will tell thee when the light again fails."

I dropped my eyes on the cauldron.

"See," whispered Margrave, "the sparkles at last begin to arise, and the rose-hues to deepen—signs that we near the last process."

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE fifth hour had passed away, when Ayesha said to me: "Lo! the circle is fading; the lamps grow dim. Look now without fear on the space beyond; the eyes that appalled thee are again lost in air, as lightnings that fleet back into cloud."

I looked up, and the spectres had vanished. The sky was tinged with sulphurous hues, the red and the black intermixed. I replenished the lamps and the ring in front, thriftily, heedfully; but when I came to the sixth lamp, not a drop in the vessel that fed them was left. In a vague dismay, I now looked round the half of the wide circle in rear of the two bended figures intent on the cauldron. All along that disc the light was already broken, here and there flickering up, here and there dying down; the six lamps in that half of the circle still twinkled, but faintly, as stars shrinking fast from the dawn of day. But it was not the fading shine in that half of the magical ring which daunted my eye and quickened with terror the pulse of my heart; the Bush-land beyond was on fire. From the background of the forest rose the flame and the smoke—the smoke, there, still half smothering the flame. But along the width of the grasses and herbage, between the verge of the forest and the bed of the water-creek just below the raised platform from which I beheld the dread conflagration, the fire was advancing; wave upon wave, clear and red against the columns of rock behind; as the rush of a flood through the mists of some Alp crowned with lightnings.

Roused from my stun at the first sight of a danger not foreseen by the mind I had steeled against far rarer portents of nature, I cared no more for the lamps and the circle. Hurrying back to Ayesha, I exclaimed: "The phantoms have gone from the spaces in front; but what incantation or spell can arrest the red march of the foe, speeding on in the rear! While we gazed on the cauldron of life, behind us, unheeded, behold the Destroyer!"

Ayesha looked and made no reply; but, as by involuntary instinct, bowed her majestic head, then, rearing it erect, placed herself yet more immediately before the wasted form of the young magician (he still bending over the cauldron, and

hearing me not in the absorption and hope of his watch): placed herself before him, as the bird whose first care is her fledgling.

As we two there stood, fronting the deluge of fire, we heard Margrave behind us, murmuring low; "See the bubbles of light, how they sparkle and dance—I shall live, I shall live!" And his words scarcely died in our ears before, crash upon crash, came the fall of the age-long trees in the forest; and nearer, all near us, through the blazing grasses, the hiss of the serpents, the screams of the birds, and the bellow and tramp of the herds plunging wild through the billowy red of their pastures.

Ayesha now wound her arms around Margrave, and wrenched him, reluctant and struggling, from his watch over the seething cauldron. In rebuke of his angry exclamations, she pointed to the march of the fire, spoke in sorrowful tones a few words in her own language, and then, appealing to me in English, said:

"I tell him that, here, the Spirits who oppose us have summoned a foe that is deaf to my voice, and—"

"And," exclaimed Margrave, no longer with gasp and effort, but with the swell of a voice which drowned all the discords of terror and of agony sent forth from the Phlegethon burning below—"and this witch, whom I trusted, is a vile slave and impostor, more desiring my death than my life. She thinks that in life I should scorn and forsake her, that in death I should die in her arms! Sorceress, avaunt! Art thou useless and powerless now when I need thee most? Go! Let the world be one funeral pyre! What to *me* is the world? My world is my life! Thou knowest that my last hope is here—that all the strength left me this night will die down, like the lamps in the circle, unless the elixir restore it. Bold friend, spurn that sorceress away. Hours yet ere those flames can assail us! A few minutes more, and life to your Lilian and me!"

Thus having said, Margrave turned from us, and cast into the cauldron the last essence yet left in his emptied coffer.

Ayesha silently drew her black veil over her face; and turned, with the being she loved, from the terror he scorned, to share in the hope that he cherished.

Thus left alone, with my reason disenthralled, disenchanted, I surveyed more calmly the extent of the actual peril with which we were threatened, and the peril seemed less, so surveyed.

It is true, all the Bush-land behind, almost up to the bed of the creek, was on fire; but the grasses, through which the flame spread so rapidly, ceased at the opposite marge of the creek. Watery pools were still at intervals, left in the bed of

the creek, shining tremulous, like waves of fire, in the glare reflected from the burning land; and even, where the water failed, the stony course of the exhausted rivulet was a barrier against the march of the conflagration. Thus, unless the wind, now still, should rise, and waft some sparks to the parched combustible herbage immediately around us we were saved from the fire, and our work might yet be achieved.

I whispered to Ayesha the conclusion to which I came.

"Thinkest thou," she answered, without raising her mournful head, "that the Agencies of Nature are the movements of chance? The Spirits I invoked to his aid are leagued with the hosts that assail. A mightier than I am has doomed him!"

Scarcely had she uttered these words before Margrave exclaimed: "Behold how the Rose of the alchemist's dream enlarges its blooms from the folds of its petals! I shall live, I shall live!"

I looked, and the liquid which glowed in the cauldron had now taken a splendor that mocked all comparisons borrowed from the lustre of gems. In its prevalent color it had, indeed, the dazzle and flash of the ruby; but, out from the mass of the molten red, broke coruscations of all prismal hues, shooting, shifting, in a play that made the wavelets themselves seem living things, sensible of their joy. No longer was there scum or film upon the surface; only ever and anon a light rosy vapor floating up, and quick lost in the haggard, heavy, sulphurous air, hot with the conflagration rushing towards us from behind. And these coruscations formed, on the surface of the molten ruby, literally the shape of a Rose, its leaves made distinct in their outlines by sparks of emerald, and diamond, and sapphire.

Even while gazing on this animate liquid lustre, a buoyant delight seemed infused into my senses; all terrors conceived before were annulled; the phantoms whose armies had filled the wide spaces in front were forgotten; the crash of the forest behind was unheard. In the reflection of that glory, Margrave's wan cheek seemed already restored to the radiance it wore when I saw it first in the frame-work of blooms.

As I gazed, thus enchanted, a cold hand touched my own.

"Hush!" whispered Ayesha, from the black veil, against which the rays from the cauldron fell blunt, and absorbed into Dark. "Behind us, the light of the circle is extinct, but, there, we are guarded from all save the brutal and soulless destroyers. But before!—but before!—see, two of the lamps have died out!—see the blank of the gap in the ring! Guard that breach—there, the demons will enter."

"Not a drop is there left in this vessel by which to replenish the lamps on the ring."

"Advance, then; thou hast still the light of the soul, and the demons may recoil before a soul that is dauntless and guiltless. If not, Three are lost!—as it is, One is doomed."

Thus adjured, silently, involuntarily, I passed from the Veiled Woman's side, over the sere lines on the turf which had been traced by the triangles of light long since extinguished, and towards the verge of the circle. As I advanced, overhead rushed a dark cloud of wings—birds dislodged from the forest on fire, and screaming, in dissonant terror, as they flew towards the farthermost mountains; close by my feet hissed and glided the snakes, driven forth from their blazing coverts and glancing through the ring, unscared by its waning lamps; all undulating by me, bright-eyed and hissing—all made innocuous by fear: even the terrible Death-adder, which I trampled on as I halted at the verge of the circle, did not turn to bite, but crept harmless away. I halted at the gap between the two dead lamps, and bowed my head to look again into the crystal vessel. Were there, indeed, no lingering drops yet left, if but to recruit the lamps for some priceless minutes more? As I thus stood, right into the gap between the two dead lamps, strode a gigantic Foot. All the rest of the form was unseen; only, as volume after volume of smoke poured on from the burning land behind, it seemed if one great column of vapor, eddying round, settled itself aloft from the circle, and that out from that column strode the giant Foot. And, as strode the Foot, so with it came, like the sound of its tread, a roll of muttered thunder.

I recoiled, with a cry that rang loud through the lurid air.

"Courage!" said the voice of Ayesha. "Trembling soul, yield not an inch to the demon!"

At the charm, the wonderful charm, in the tone of the Veiled Woman's voice, my will seemed to take a force more sublime than its own. I folded my arms on my breast, and stood as if rooted to the spot, confronting the column of smoke and the stride of the giant Foot. And the Foot halted, mute.

Again, in the momentary hush of that suspense, I heard a voice—it was Margrave's.

"The last hour expires—the work is accomplished! Come! come!—aid me to take the cauldron from the fire; and, quick!—or a drop may be wasted in vapor—the Elixir of Life from the cauldron!"

At that cry I receded, and the Foot advanced.

And at that moment, suddenly, unawares, from behind, I was

stricken down. Over me, as I lay, swept a whirlwind of trampling hoofs and glancing horns. The herds, in their flight from the burning pastures, had rushed over the bed of the watercourse—scaled the slopes of the banks. Snorting and bellowing, they plunged their blind way to the mountain. One cry alone, more wild than their own savage blare, pierced the reek through which the Brute Hurricane swept. At that cry of wrath and despair I struggled to rise, again dashed to earth by the hoofs and the horns. But was it the dreamlike deceit of my reeling senses, or did I see that giant Foot stride past through the close-serried ranks of the maddening herds? Did I hear, distinct through all the huge uproar of animal terror, the roll of low thunder which followed the stride of that Foot?

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

When my sense had recovered its shock, and my eyes looked dizzily round, the charge of the beasts had swept by; and of all the wild tribes which had invaded the magical circle, the only lingerer was the brown Death-adder, coiled close by the spot where my head had rested. Beside the extinguished lamps which the hoofs had confusedly scattered, the fire, arrested by the watercourse, had consumed the grasses that fed it, and there the plains stretched, black and desert as the Phlegræan Field of the Poet's Hell. But the fire still raged in the forest beyond: white flames, soaring up from the trunks of the tallest trees, and forming, through the sullen dark of the smoke-reek, innumerable pillars of fire, like the halls in the City of Fiends.

Gathering myself up, I turned my eyes from the terrible pomp of the lurid forest, and looked fearfully down on the hoof-trambled sward for my two companions.

I saw the dark image of Ayesha still seated, still bending, as I had seen it last. I saw a pale hand feebly grasping the rim of the magical cauldron, which lay hurled down from its tripod by the rush of the beasts, yards away from the dim fading embers of the scattered wood pyre. I saw the faint writhings of a frail wasted frame, over which the Veiled Woman was bending. I saw, as I moved with bruised limbs to the place, close by the lips of the dying magician, the flash of the ruby-like essence spilt on the sward, and, meteor-like, sparkling up from the torn tufts of herbage.

I now reached Margrave's side. Bending over him as the Veiled Woman bent, and as I sought gently to raise him, he

turned his face, fiercely faltering out: "Touch me not, rob me not! *You* share with me! Never—never! These glorious drops are all mine! Die all else! I will live—I will live!" Writhing himself from my pitying arms, he plunged his face amidst the beautiful, playful flame of the essence, as if to lap the elixir with lips scorched away from its intolerable burning. Suddenly, with a low shriek, he fell back, his face upturned to mine, and on that face unmistakably reigned Death!

Then Ayesha tenderly, silently, drew the young head to her lap, and it vanished from my sight behind her black veil.

I knelt beside her, murmuring some trite words of comfort; but she heeded me not, rocking herself to and fro as the mother who cradles a child to sleep. Soon, the fast-flickering sparkles of the lost elixir died out on the grass; and with their last sportive diamond-like tremble of light, up, in all the suddenness of Australian day, rose the sun, lifting himself royally above the mountain-tops, and fronting the meaner blaze of the forest as a young king fronts his rebels. And as there, where the bush-fires had ravaged, all was a desert; so there, where their fury had not spread, all was a garden. Afar, at the foot of the mountains, the fugitive herds were grazing; the cranes flocking back to the pools, renewed the strange grace of their gambols; and the great kingfisher, whose laugh, half in mirth, half in mockery, leads the choir that welcome the morn—which in Europe is night—alighted bold on the roof of the cavern, whose floors were still white with the bones of races, extinct before—so helpless through instincts, so royal through Soul—rose MAN!

But there, on the ground where the dazzling elixir had wasted its virtues—there the herbage already had a freshness of verdure which, amid the duller sward round it, was like an oasis of green in a desert. And, there, wild flowers, whose chill hues the eye would have scarcely distinguished the day before, now glittered forth in blooms of unfamiliar beauty. Towards that spot were attracted myriads of happy insects, whose hum of intense joy was musically loud. But the form of the life-seeking sorcerer lay rigid and stark—blind to the bloom of the wild flowers, deaf to the glee of the insects; one hand still resting heavily on the rim of the emptied cauldron, and the face still hid behind the Black Veil. What! the wondrous elixir, sought with such hope and well-nigh achieved through such dread, fleeting back to the earth from which its material was drawn, to give bloom, indeed—but to herbs; joy indeed—but to insects!

And now, in the flash of the sun, slowly wound up the slopes that led to the circle the same barbaric procession which had sunk into the valley under the ray of the moon. The armed men came first, stalwart and tall, their vests brave with crimson and golden lace, their weapons gayly gleaming with holiday silver. After them, the Black Litter. As they came to the place, Ayesha, not raising her head, spoke to them in her own Eastern tongue. A wail was her answer. The armed men bounded forward, and the bearers left the litter.

All gathered round the dead form with the face concealed under the black veil—all knelt, and all wept. Far in the distance, at the foot of the blue mountains, a crowd of the savage natives had risen up as if from the earth; they stood motionless, leaning on their clubs and spears, and looking towards the spot on which we were; strangely thus brought into the landscape, as if they too, the wild dwellers on the verge which Humanity guards from the Brute, were among the mourners for the mysterious Child of mysterious Nature! And still, in the herbage, hummed the small insects, and still, from the cavern, laughed the great kingfisher. I said to Ayesha: "Farewell! your love mourns the dead, mine calls me to the living. You are now with your own people, they may console you—say if I can assist."

"There is no consolation for me! What mourner can be consoled if the dead die forever? Nothing for him is left but a grave; that grave shall be in the land where the song of Ayesha first lulled him to sleep. Thou assist ME—thou, the wise man of Europe! From me ask assistance. What road wilt thou take to thy home?"

"There is but one road known to me through the maze of the solitude—that which we took to this upland."

"On that road Death lurks, and awaits thee! Blind dupe, couldst thou think that if the grand secret of life had been won, he whose head rests on my lap would have yielded thee one petty drop of the essence which had filched from his store of life but a moment? Me, who so loved and so cherished him—me he would have doomed to the pitiless cord of my servant, the Strangler, if my death could have lengthened a hairbreadth the span of his being. But what matters to me his crime or his madness? I loved him—I loved him!"

She bowed her veiled head lower and lower; perhaps under the veil, her lips kissed the lips of the dead. Then she said whisperingly:

"Juma, the Strangler, whose word never failed to his mas-

ter, whose prey never slipped from his snare, waits thy step on the road to thy home! But thy death can not now profit the dead, the beloved. And thou hast had pity for him who took but thine aid to design thy destruction. His life is lost, thine is saved!"

She spoke no more in the tongue that I could interpret. She spoke, in the language unknown, a few murmured words to her swarthy attendants; then the armed men, still weeping, rose, and made a dumb sign to me to go with them. I understood by the sign that Ayesha had told them to guard me on my way; but she gave no reply to my parting thanks.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

I DESCENDED into the valley; the armed men followed. The path, on that side of the watercourse not reached by the flames, wound through meadows still green, or amidst groves still unscathed. As a turning in the way brought in front of my sight the place I had left behind, I beheld the black litter creeping down the descent, with its curtains closed, and the Veiled Woman walking by its side. But soon the funeral procession was lost to my eyes, and the thoughts that it roused were erased. The waves in man's brain are like those of the sea, rushing on, rushing over the wrecks of the vessels that rode on their surface, to sink, after storm, in their deeps. One thought cast forth into the future now mastered all in the past: "Was Lilian living still?" Absorbed in the gloom of that thought, hurried on by the goad that my heart, in its tortured impatience, gave to my footstep, I outstripped the slow stride of the armed men, and, midway between the place I had left and the home which I sped to, came, far in advance of my guards, into the thicket in which the bushmen had started up in my path on the night that Lilian had watched for my coming. The earth at my feet was rife with creeping plants and many-colored flowers, the sky overhead was half-hid by motionless pines. Suddenly, whether crawling out from the herbage or dropping down from the trees, by my side stood the white-robed and skeleton form—Ayesha's attendant, the Strangler.

I sprang from him in shuddering, then halted and faced him. The hideous creature crept towards me, cringing and fawning, making signs of humble good-will and servile obeisance. Again I recoiled, wrathfully, loathingly; turned my face homeward, and fled on. I thought I had baffled his chase, when, just at

the mouth of the thicket, he dropped from a bough in my path close behind me. Before I could turn, some dark muffling substance fell between my sight and the sun, and I felt a fierce strain at my throat. But the words of Ayesha had warned me; with one rapid hand I seized the noose before it could tighten too closely, with the other I tore the bandage away from my eyes, and, wheeling round on the dastardly foe, struck him down with one spurn of my foot. His hand, as he fell, relaxed its hold on the noose; I freed my throat from the knot, and sprang from the copse into the broad sunlit plain. I saw no more of the armed men or the Strangler. Panting and breathless, I paused at last before the fence, fragrant with blossoms, that divided my home from the solitude.

The windows of Lilian's room were darkened—all within the house seemed still.

Darkened and silenced Home! with the light and sounds of the jocund day all around it. Was there yet Hope in the Universe for me? All to which I had trusted Hope, had broken down; the anchors I had forged for her hold in the beds of the ocean, her stay from the drifts of the storm, had snapped like the reeds which pierce the side that leans on the barb of their points and confides in the strength of their stems. No hope in the baffled resources of recognized knowledge! No hope in the daring adventures of Mind into regions unknown; vain alike the calm lore of the practised physician, and the magical arts of the fated Enchanter! I had fled from the commonplace teachings of Nature, to explore in her Shadow-land marvels at variance with reason. Made brave by the grandeur of love, I had opposed without quailing the stride of the Demon, and my hope, when fruition seemed nearest, had been trodden into dust by the hoofs of the beast! And yet, all the while, I had scorned, as a dream more wild than the word of a sorcerer, the hope that the old man and child, the wise and the ignorant, took from their souls as inborn. Man and fiend had alike failed a mind, not ignoble, not skilless, not abjectly craven; alike failed a heart not feeble and selfish, not dead to the hero's devotion, willing to shed every drop of its blood for a something more dear than an animal's life for itself! What remained—what remained for man's hope?—man's mind and man's heart thus exhausting their all with no other result but despair? What remained but the mystery of mysteries, so clear to the sunrise of childhood, the sunset of age, only dimmed by the clouds which collect round the noon of our manhood? Where yet was Hope found? In the soul; in its every-day im-

pulse to supplicate comfort and light, from the Giver of soul, wherever the heart is afflicted, the mind is obscured.

Then the words of Ayesha rushed over me: "What mourner can be consoled, if the Dead die forever?" Through every pulse of my frame throbbed that dread question. All Nature around seemed to murmur it. And suddenly, as by a flash from Heaven, the grand truth in Faber's grand reasoning shone on me, and lighted up all, within and without. Man alone, of all earthly creatures, asks, "Can the Dead die forever?" and the instinct that urges the question is God's answer to man! No instinct is given in vain.

And, born with the instinct of soul is the instinct that leads the soul from the seen to the unseen, from time to eternity, from the torrent that foams towards the Ocean of Death to the source of its stream, far aloft from the Ocean.

"Know thyself," said the Pythian of old. "That precept descended from Heaven." Know thyself! is that maxim wise? If so, know thy soul. But never yet did man come to the thorough conviction of soul, but what he acknowledged the sovereign necessity of prayer. In my awe, in my rapture, all my thoughts seemed enlarged and illumed and exalted. I prayed—all my soul seemed one prayer. All my past, with its pride and presumption and folly, grew distinct as the form of a penitent, kneeling for pardon before setting forth on the pilgrimage vowed to a shrine. And, sure now, in the deeps of a soul first revealed to myself, that the Dead do not die forever, my human love soared beyond its brief trial of terror and sorrow. Daring not to ask from Heaven's wisdom that Lilian, for my sake, might not yet pass away from the earth, I prayed that my soul might be fitted to bear with submission whatever my Maker might ordain. And if surviving her—without whom no beam from yon material sun could ever warm into joy a morrow in human life—so to guide my steps that they might rejoin her at last, and, in rejoining, regain forever!

How trivial now became the weird riddles that, a little while before, had been clothed in so solemn an awe! What mattered it to the vast interests involved in the clear recognition of Soul and Hereafter, whether or not my bodily sense, for a moment, obscure the face of the Nature I should one day behold as a spirit? Doubtless the sights and the sounds which had haunted the last gloomy night, the calm reason of Faber would strip of their magical seemings; the Eyes in the space and the Foot in the circle might be those of no terrible Demons, but of the wild's savage children whom I had seen, halting curious and mute, in

the light of the morning. The tremor of the ground (if not, as heretofore, explicable by the illusory impression of my own treacherous senses) might be but the natural effect of elements struggling yet under a soil unmistakably charred by volcanoes. The luminous atoms dissolved in the cauldron might as little be fraught with a vital elixir as are the splendors of naphtha or phosphor. As it was, the weird rite had no magic result. The magician was not rent limb from limb by the fiends. By causes as natural as ever extinguished life's spark in the frail lamp of clay, he had died out of sight—under the black veil.

What mattered henceforth to Faith, in its far grander questions and answers, whether Reason, in Faber, or Fancy, in me, supplied the more probable guess at a hieroglyph which, if construed aright, was but a word of small mark in the mystical language of Nature? If all the arts of enchantment recorded by Fable were attested by facts which Sages were forced to acknowledge, Sages would sooner or later find some cause for such portents—not supernatural. But what Sage, without cause supernatural, both without and within him, can guess at the wonders he views in the growth of a blade of grass, or the tints on an insect's wing? Whatever art Man can achieve in his progress through time, Man's reason, in time, can suffice to explain. But the wonders of God? These belong to the Infinite; and these, O Immortal! will but develop new wonder on wonder, though thy sight be a spirit's, and thy leisure to track and to solve, an eternity.

As I raised my face from my clasped hands, my eyes fell full upon a form standing in the open doorway. There, where on the night in which Lilian's long struggle for reason and life had begun, the Luminous Shadow had been beheld in the doubtful light of a dying moon and a yet hazy dawn; there, on the threshold, gathering round her bright locks the aureole of the glorious sun, stood Amy, the blessed child! And as I gazed, drawing nearer and nearer to the silenced house, and that Image of Peace on its threshold, I felt that Hope met me at the door—Hope in the child's steadfast eyes—Hope in the child's welcoming smile!

"I was at watch for you," whispered Amy. "All is well."

"She lives still—she lives! Thank God—thank God!"

"She lives—she will recover!" said another voice, as my head sunk on Faber's shoulder. "For some hours in the night her sleep was disturbed—convulsed. I feared then, the worst. Suddenly, just before the dawn, she called out aloud, still in sleep:

"'The cold and dark shadow has passed away from me, and from Allen—passed away from us both forever!'

"And from that moment the fever left her; the breathing became soft, the pulse steady, and the color stole gradually back to her cheek. The crisis is past. Nature's benign Disposer has permitted Nature to restore your life's gentle partner, heart to heart, mind to mind—"

"And soul to soul," I cried, in my solemn joy. "Above as below, soul to soul!" Then, at a sign from Faber, the child took me by the hand and led me up the stairs into Lilian's room.

Again those dear arms closed round me in wife-like and holy love, and those true lips kissed away my tears—even as now, at the distance of years from that happy morn, while I write the last words of this Strange Story, the same faithful arms close around me, the same tender lips kiss away my tears.

THE END.

THE

HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS:

OR,

THE HOUSE AND THE BRAIN.

A FRIEND of mine, who is a man of letters and a philosopher, said to me one day, as if between jest and earnest: "Fancy! since we last met, I have discovered a haunted house in the midst of London."

"Really haunted?—and by what? Ghosts?"

"Well, I can't answer that question; all I know is this—six weeks ago my wife and I were in search of a furnished apartment. Passing a quiet street, we saw on the window of one of the houses a bill, 'Apartments Furnished.' The situation suited us: we entered the house, liked the rooms, engaged them by the week, and left them the third day. No power on earth could have reconciled my wife to stay longer; and I don't wonder at it."

"What did you see?"

"Excuse me—I have no desire to be ridiculed as a superstitious dreamer, nor, on the other hand, could I ask you to accept on my affirmation what you would hold to be incredible without the evidence of your own senses. Let me only say this, it was not so much what we saw or heard (in which you might fairly suppose that we were the dupes of our own excited fancy, or the victims of imposture in others) that drove us away, as it was an undefinable terror which seized both of us whenever we passed by the door of a certain unfurnished room, in which we neither saw nor heard anything. And the strangest marvel of all was, that for once in my life I agreed with my wife, silly woman though she be, and allowed, after the third night, that it was impossible to stay a fourth in that house. Accordingly, on the fourth morning I summoned the woman who kept the house and attended on us, and told her

that the rooms did not quite suit us, and we would not stay out our week. She said dryly: 'I know why; you have stayed longer than any other lodger. Few ever stayed a second night; none before you a third. But I take it they have been very kind to you.'

"'They—who?' I asked, affecting to smile.

"Why, they who haunt the house, whoever they are. I don't mind them; I remember them many years ago when I lived in this house, not as a servant; but I know they will be the death of me some day. I don't care—I'm old, and must die soon anyhow; and then I shall be with them, and in this house still.' The woman spoke with so dreary a calmness, that really it was a sort of awe that prevented my conversing with her further. I paid for my week, and too happy were my wife and I to get off so cheaply."

"You excite my curiosity," said I; "Nothing I should like better than to sleep in a haunted house. Pray give the address of the one which you left so ignominiously.

My friend gave me the address; and when we parted, I walked straight towards the house thus indicated.

It is situated on the north side of Oxford Street, in a dull but respectable thoroughfare. I found the house shut up—no bill at the window, and no response to my knock. As I was turning away, a beer-boy, collecting pewter pots at the neighboring areas, said to me: "Do you want any one at that house, sir?"

"Yes, I heard it was to be let."

"Let! Why, the woman who kept it is dead—has been dead these three weeks, and no one can be found to stay there, though Mr. J—— offered ever so much. He offered mother, who chars for him, £1 a week just to open and shut the windows, and she would not."

"Would not! And why?"

"The house is haunted; and the old woman who kept it was found dead in her bed, with her eyes wide open. They say the devil strangled her."

"Pooh! You speak of Mr. J——. Is he the owner of the house?"

"Yes."

"Where does he live?"

"In G—— Street, No. —.

"What is he!—in any business?"

"No, sir—nothing particular; a single gentleman."

I gave the pot-boy the gratuity earned by his liberal in-

formation, and proceeded to Mr. J——, in G—— Street, which was close by the street that boasted the haunted house. I was lucky enough to find Mr. J—— at home—an elderly man, with intelligent countenance and prepossessing manners.

I communicated my name and my business frankly. I said I heard the house was considered to be haunted; that I had a strong desire to examine a house with so equivocal a reputation; that I should be greatly obliged if he would allow me to hire it, though only for a night. I was willing to pay for that privilege what he might be inclined to ask. "Sir," said Mr. J——, with great courtesy, "the house is at your service, for as short or as long a time as you please. Rent is out of the question—the obligation will be on my side should you be able to discover the cause of the strange phenomena which at present deprive it of all value. I cannot let it, for I cannot even get a servant to keep it in order or answer the door. Unluckily the house is haunted, if I may use that expression, not only by night, but by day; though at night the disturbances are of a more unpleasant and sometimes of a more alarming character. The poor old woman who died in it three weeks ago was a pauper whom I took out of a workhouse, for in her childhood she had been known to some of my family, and had once been in such good circumstances that she had rented that house of my uncle. She was a woman of superior education and strong mind, and was the only person I could ever induce to remain in the house. Indeed, since her death, which was sudden, and the coroner's inquest, which gave it a notoriety in the neighborhood, I have so despaired of finding any person to take charge of the house, much more a tenant, that I would willingly let it rent-free for a year to any one who would pay its rates and taxes."

"How long is it since the house acquired this sinister character?"

"That I can scarcely tell you, but very many years since. The old woman I spoke of said it was haunted when she rented it between thirty and forty years ago. The fact is, that my life has been spent in the East Indies, and in the civil service of the Company. I returned to England last year, on inheriting the fortune of an uncle, among whose possessions was the house in question. I found it shut up and uninhabited. I was told that it was haunted; that no one would inhabit it. I smiled at what seemed to me so idle a story. I spent some money in repairing it; added to its old-fashioned furniture a few modern articles; advertised it, and obtained a lodger for

a year. He was a colonel retired on half-pay. He came in with his family, a son and a daughter, and four or five servants: they all left the house the next day; and, though each of them declared that he had seen something different from that which scared the others, a something still was equally terrible to all. I really could not in conscience sue, nor even blame, the colonel for breach of agreement. Then I put in the old woman I have spoken of, and she was empowered to let the house in apartments. I never had one lodger who stayed more than three days. I do not tell you their stories—to no two lodgers have there been exactly the same phenomena repeated. It is better that you should judge for yourself than enter the house with an imagination influenced by previous narratives; only be prepared to see and to hear something or other, and take whatever precautions you yourself please."

"Have you never had a curiosity yourself to pass a night in that house?"

"Yes. I passed not a night, but three hours in broad daylight alone in that house. My curiosity is not satisfied, but it is quenched. I have no desire to renew the experiment. You cannot complain, you see, sir, that I am not sufficiently candid; and unless your interest be exceedingly eager and your nerves unusually strong, I honestly add, that I advise you *not* to pass a night in that house."

"My interest *is* exceedingly keen," said I, "and though only a coward will boast of his nerves in situations wholly unfamiliar to him, yet my nerves have been seasoned in such variety of danger that I have the right to rely on them—even in a haunted house."

Mr. J—— said very little more; he took the keys of the house out of his bureau, gave them to me, and, thanking him cordially for his frankness, and his urbane concession to my wish, I carried off my prize.

Impatient for the experiment, as soon as I reached home, I summoned my confidential servant—a young man of gay spirits, fearless temper, and as free from superstitious prejudice as any one I could think of.

"F——," said I, "you remember in Germany how disappointed we were at not finding a ghost in that old castle, which was said to be haunted by a headless apparition? Well, I have heard of a house in London which, I have reason to hope, is decidedly haunted. I mean to sleep there to-night. From what I hear there is no doubt that something will allow itself to be seen or to be heard—something, perhaps, excessively

horrible. Do you think if I take you with me, I may rely on your presence of mind, whatever may happen?"

"Oh, sir! pray trust me," answered F——, grinning with delight.

"Very well; then here are the keys of the house—this is the address. Go now—select for me any bedroom you please; and since the house has not been inhabited for weeks, make up a good fire, air the bed well—see, of course, that there are candles as well as fuel. Take with you my revolver and my dagger—so much for my weapons—arm yourself equally well; and if we are not a match for a dozen ghosts, we shall be but a sorry couple of Englishmen."

I was engaged for the rest of the day on business so urgent that I had not leisure to think much on the nocturnal adventure to which I had plighted my honor. I dined alone, and very late, and while dining, read, as is my habit. I selected one of the volumes of Macaulay's Essays. I thought to myself that I would take the book with me; there was so much healthfulness in the style, and practical life in the subjects, that it would serve as an antidote against the influences of superstitious fancy.

Accordingly, about half-past nine, I put the book into my pocket, and strolled leisurely towards the haunted house. I took with me a favorite dog—an exceedingly sharp, bold, and vigilant bull-terrier—a dog fond of prowling about strange ghostly corners and passages at night in search of rats—a dog of dogs for a ghost.

It was a summer night, but chilly, the sky somewhat gloomy and overcast. Still there was a moon—faint and sickly, but still a moon—and if the clouds permitted, after midnight it would be brighter.

I reached the house, knocked, and my servant opened with a cheerful smile.

"All right, sir, and very comfortable."

"Oh!" said I, rather disappointed; "have you not seen nor heard anything remarkable?"

"Well, sir, I must own I have heard something queer."

"What?—what?"

"The sound of feet pattering behind me; and once or twice small noises like whispers close at my ear—nothing more."

"You are not at all frightened?"

"I! Not a bit of it, sir"; and the man's bold look reassured me on one point, viz., that happen what might, he would not desert me.

We were in the hall, the street-door closed, and my attention was now drawn to my dog. He had at first run in eagerly enough, but had sneaked back to the door, and was scratching and whining to get out. After patting him on the head, and encouraging him gently, the dog seemed to reconcile himself to the situation and followed me and F—— through the house, but keeping close at my heels instead of hurrying inquisitively in advance, which was his usual and natural habit in all strange places. We first visited the subterranean apartments, the kitchen and other offices, and especially the cellars, in which last there were two or three bottles of wine still left in a bin, covered with cobwebs, and evidently, by their appearance, undisturbed for many years. It was clear that the ghosts were not wine-bibbers. For the rest we discovered nothing of interest. There was a gloomy little backyard, with very high walls. The stones of this yard were very damp; and what with the damp, and what with the dust and smoke-grime on the pavement, our feet left a slight impression where we passed. And now appeared the first strange phenomenon witnessed by myself in this strange abode. I saw, just before me, the print of a foot suddenly form itself, as it were. I stopped, caught hold of my servant, and pointed to it. In advance of that footprint as suddenly dropped another. We both saw it. I advanced quietly to the place; the footprint kept advancing before me, a small footprint—the foot of a child: the impression was too faint thoroughly to distinguish the shape, but it seemed to us both that it was the print of a naked foot. This phenomenon ceased when we arrived at the opposite wall, nor did it repeat itself on returning. We remounted the stairs, and entered the rooms on the ground floor, a dining-parlor, a small back parlor, and a still smaller third room that had been probably appropriated to a footman—all still as death. We then visited the drawing-rooms, which seemed fresh and new. In the front room I seated myself in an armchair. F—— placed on the table the candlestick with which he had lighted us. I told him to shut the door. As he turned to do so, a chair opposite to me moved from the wall quickly and noiselessly, and dropped itself about a yard from my own chair, immediately fronting it.

"Why, this is better than the turning tables," said I, with a half-laugh; and as I laughed, my dog put back his head and howled.

F——, coming back, had not observed the movement of the chair. He employed himself now in stilling the dog. I con-

tinued to gaze on the chair, and fancied I saw on it a pale blue misty outline of a human figure, but an outline so indistinct that I could only distrust my own vision. The dog now was quiet.

"Put back that chair opposite to me," said I to F——; "put it back to the wall."

F—— obeyed. "Was that you, sir?" said he, turning abruptly.

"I!—What?"

"Why, something struck me. I felt it sharply on the shoulder—just here."

"No," said I. "But we have jugglers present, and though we may not discover their tricks, we shall catch *them* before they frighten *us*."

We did not stay long in the drawing-rooms—in fact, they felt so damp and chilly that I was glad to get to the fire upstairs. We locked the doors of the drawing-rooms—a precaution which, I should observe, we had taken with all the rooms we had searched below. The bedroom my servant had selected for me was the best on the floor—a large one, with two windows fronting the street. The four-posted bed, which took up no inconsiderable space, was opposite to the fire, which burnt clear and bright; a door in the wall to the left, between the bed and the window, communicated with the room which my servant appropriated to himself. This last was a small room with a sofa-bed and had no communication with the landing-place—no other door but that which conducted to the bedroom I was to occupy. On either side of my fireplace was a cupboard, without locks, flush with the wall, and covered with the same dull-brown paper. We examined these cupboards—only hooks to suspend female dresses—nothing else; we sounded the walls—evidently solid—the outer walls of the building. Having finished the survey of these apartments, warmed myself a few moments, and lighted my cigar, I then, still accompanied by F——, went forth to complete my reconnoitre. In the landing-place there was another door; it was closed firmly. "Sir," said my servant, in surprise, "I unlocked this door with all the others when I first came; it cannot have got locked from the inside, for—"

Before he had finished his sentence the door, which neither of us then was touching, opened quietly of itself. We looked at each other a single instant. The same thought seized both—some human agency might be detected here. I rushed in first, my servant followed. A small, blank, dreary room with-

out furniture—few empty boxes and hampers in a corner, a small window, the shutters closed, not even a fire-place; no other door but that by which we had entered; no carpet on the floor, and the floor seemed very old, uneven, worm-eaten, mended here and there, as was shown by the whiter patches on the wood; but no living being, and no visible place in which a living being could have hidden. As we stood gazing round, the door by which we had entered closed as quietly as it had before opened; we were imprisoned.

For the first time I felt a creep of undefinable horror. Not so my servant. "Why, they don't think to trap us, sir; I could break the trumpery door with a kick of my foot."

"Try first if it will open to your hand," said I, shaking off the vague apprehension that had seized me, "while I unclose the shutters and see what is without."

I unbarred the shutters; the window looked on the little back-yard I have before described; there was no ledge without—nothing to break the sheer descent of the wall. No man getting out of that window would have found any footing till he had fallen on the stones below.

F——, meanwhile, was vainly attempting to open the door. He now turned round to me and asked my permission to use force. And I should here state, in justice to the servant, that, far from evincing any superstitious terrors, his nerve, composure, and even gayety amidst circumstances so extraordinary, compelled my admiration, and made me congratulate myself on having secured a companion fitted in every way for the occasion. I willingly gave him the permission he required. But though he was a remarkably strong man, his force was as idle as his milder efforts; the door did not even shake to his stoutest kick. Breathless and panting, he desisted. I then tried the door myself, equally in vain. As I ceased from the effort, again that creep of horror came over me: but this time it was more cold and stubborn. I felt as if some strange and ghastly exhalation were rising up from the chinks of that rugged floor, and filling the atmosphere with a venomous influence hostile to human life. The door now very slowly and quietly opened as of its own accord. We precipitated ourselves into the landing-place. We both saw a large pale light—as large as the human figure but shapeless and unsubstantial—move before us, and ascend the stairs that led from the landing into the attics. I followed the light, and my servant followed me. It entered, to the right of the landing, a small garret, of which the door stood open. I entered in the same instant. The light

then collapsed into a small globule, exceedingly brilliant and vivid; rested a moment on a bed in the corner, quivered, and vanished. We approached the bed and examined it—a half-tester, such as is commonly found in attics devoted to servants. On the drawers that stood near it we perceived an old faded silk kerchief, with the needle still left in a rent half-repaired. The kerchief was covered with dust; probably it had belonged to the old woman who had last died in that house, and this might have been her sleeping-room. I had sufficient curiosity to open the drawers: there were a few odds and ends of female dress, and two letters tied round with a narrow ribbon of faded yellow. I took the liberty to possess myself of the letters. We found nothing else in the room worth noticing, nor did the light reappear; but we distinctly heard, as we turned to go, a pattering footfall on the floor just before us. We went through the other attics (all four), the footfall still preceding us. Nothing to be seen—nothing but the footfall heard. I had the letters in my hand: just as I was descending the stairs I distinctly felt my wrist seized, and a faint soft effort made to draw the letters from my clasp. I only held them the more tightly, and the effort ceased.

We regained the bedchamber appropriated to myself, and I then remarked that my dog had not followed us when we had left it. He was thrusting himself close to the fire, and trembling. I was impatient to examine the letters; and while I read them, my servant opened a little box in which he had deposited the weapons I had ordered him to bring; took them out, placed them on a table close at my bed-head, and then occupied himself in soothing the dog, who, however, seemed to heed him very little.

The letters were short—they were dated; the dates exactly thirty-five years ago. They were evidently from a lover to his mistress, or a husband to some young wife. Not only the terms of expression, but a distinct reference to a former voyage, indicated the writer to have been a seafarer. The spelling and handwriting were those of a man imperfectly educated, but still the language itself was forcible. In the expressions of endearment there was a kind of rough, wild love; but here and there were dark unintelligible hints at some secret not of love—some secret that seemed of crime, "We ought to love each other," was one of the sentences I remember, "for how every one else would execrate us if all was known." Again: "Don't let any one be in the same room with you at night—you talk in your sleep." And again: "What's done can't be

undone ; and I tell you there's nothing against us unless the dead could come to life." Here there was underlined in a better handwriting (a female's), "They do!" At the end of the letter latest in date the same female hand had written these words : "Lost at sea the 4th of June, the same date as —."

I put down the letters, and began to muse over their contents.

Fearing, however, that the train of thought into which I fell might unsteady my nerves, I fully determined to keep my mind in a fit state to cope with whatever of marvellous the advancing night might bring forth. I roused myself, laid the letters on the table, stirred up the fire, which was still bright and cheering, and opened my volume of Macaulay. I read quietly enough till about half-past eleven. I then threw myself dressed upon the bed, and told my servant he might retire to his own room, but must keep himself awake. I bade him leave open the door between the two rooms. Thus alone, I kept two candles burning on my bed-head. I placed my watch beside the weapons, and calmly resumed my Macaulay. Opposite to me the fire burned clear ; and on the hearthrug, seemingly asleep, lay the dog. In about twenty minutes I felt an exceedingly cold air pass by my cheek like a sudden draught. I fancied the door to my right, communicating with the landing-place, must have got open ; but no—it was closed. I then turned my gaze to my left, and saw the flame of the candles violently swayed as by a wind. At the same moment my watch beside the revolver softly slid from the table—softly, softly—no visible hand—it was gone. I sprang up, seizing the revolver with the one hand, the dagger with the other ; I was not willing that my weapons should share the fate of my watch. Thus armed, I looked round the floor—no sign of the watch. Three slow, loud, distinct knocks were now heard at the bed-head ; my servant called out, "Is that you, sir?"

"No ; be on your guard."

The dog now roused himself and sat on his haunches, his ears moving quickly backwards and forwards. He kept his eyes fixed on me with a look so strange that he concentrated all my attention on himself. Slowly he rose up, all his hair bristling, and stood perfectly rigid, and with the same wild stare. I had no time, however, to examine the dog. Presently my servant emerged from his room ; and if ever I saw horror in the human face, it was then. I should not have recognized him had we met in the street, so altered was every lineament. He passed by me quickly, saying in a whisper that seemed

scarcely to come from his lips: "Run—run! It is after me!" He gained the door to the landing, pulled it open, and rushed forth. I followed him into the landing involuntarily, calling him to stop; but, without heeding me, he bounded down the stairs, clinging to the balusters, and taking several steps at a time. I heard, where I stood, the street-door open—heard it again clap to. I was left alone in the haunted house.

It was but for a moment that I remained undecided whether or not to follow my servant; pride and curiosity alike forbade so dastardly a flight. I re-entered my room, closing the door after me, and proceeded cautiously into the interior chamber. I encountered nothing to justify my servant's terror. I again carefully examined the walls, to see if there were any concealed door. I could find no trace of one, not even a seam in the dull-brown paper with which the room was hung. How, then, had the THING, whatever it was, which had so scared him, obtained ingress except through my own chamber?

I returned to my room, shut and locked the door that opened upon the interior one, and stood on the hearth, expectant and prepared. I now perceived that the dog had slunk into an angle of the wall, and was pressing himself close against it, as if literally striving to force his way into it; the poor brute was evidently beside itself with terror. It showed all its teeth, the slaver dropping from its jaws, and would certainly have bitten me if I had touched it. It did not seem to recognize me. Whoever has seen at the Zoological Gardens a rabbit fascinated by a serpent, cowering in a corner, may form some idea of the anguish which the dog exhibited. Finding all efforts to soothe the animal in vain, and fearing that his bite might be as venomous in that state as in the madness of hydrophobia, I left him alone, placed my weapons on the table beside the fire, seated myself, and recommenced my Macaulay.

Perhaps, in order not to appear seeking credit for a courage, or rather coolness, which the reader may conceive I exaggerate, I may be pardoned if I pause to indulge in one or two egotistical remarks.

As I hold presence of mind, or what is called courage, to be precisely proportioned to familiarity with the circumstances that lead to it, so I should say that I had been long sufficiently familiar with all experiments that appertain to the Marvelous. I had witnessed many very extraordinary phenomena that would be either totally disbelieved if I stated them, or ascribed to supernatural agencies. Now, my theory is that the Supernatural is the Impossible, and that what is called supernatural is

only a something in the laws of nature of which we have been hitherto ignorant. Therefore, if a ghost rise before me, I have not the right to say, "So, then, the supernatural is possible," but rather, "So, then, the apparition of a ghost is, contrary to received opinion, within the laws of nature, *i. e.*, not supernatural."

Now, in all that I had hitherto witnessed, and indeed in all the wonders which the amateurs of mystery in our age record as facts, a material living agency is always required. On the Continent you will find still magicians who assert that they can raise spirits. Assume for the moment that they assert truly, still the living material form of the magician is present; and he is the material agency by which, from some constitutional peculiarities, certain strange phenomena are represented to your natural senses.

Accept, again, as truthful, the tales of Spirit Manifestation in America—musical or other sounds—writings on paper, produced by no discernible hand, articles of furniture moved without apparent human agency, or the actual sight and touch of hands, to which no bodies seem to belong—still there must be found the MEDIUM, or living being, with constitutional peculiarities capable of obtaining these signs. In fine, in all such marvels, supposing even that there is no imposture, there must be a human being like ourselves by whom, or through whom, the effects presented to human beings are produced. It is so with the now familiar phenomena of mesmerism or electro-biology; the mind of a person operated on is affected through a material living agent. Nor, supposing it true that a mesmerized patient can respond to the will or passes of a mesmerizer a hundred miles distant, is the response less occasioned by a material being; it may be through a material fluid—call it Electric, call it Odic, call it what you will—which has the power of traversing space and passing obstacles, that the material effect is communicated from one to the other. Hence all that I had hitherto witnessed, or expected to witness, in this strange house, I believed to be occasioned through some agency or medium as mortal as myself: and this idea necessarily prevented the awe with which those who regard as supernatural, things that are not within the ordinary operations of nature, might have been impressed by the adventures of that memorable night.

As, then, it was my conjecture that all that was presented, or would be presented to my senses, must originate in some human being gifted by constitution with the power so to pre-

sent them, and having some motive so to do, I felt an interest in my theory which, in its way, was rather philosophical than superstitious. And I can sincerely say that I was in as tranquil a temper for observation as any practical experimentalist could be in awaiting the effects of some rare, though perhaps perilous, chemical combination. Of course, the more I kept my mind detached from fancy, the more the temper fitted for observation would be obtained ; and I therefore riveted eye and thought on the strong daylight sense in the page of my Macaulay.

I now became aware that something interposed between the page and the light—the page was overshadowed : I looked up, and I saw what I shall find it very difficult, perhaps impossible, to describe.

It was a Darkness shaping itself forth from the air in very undefined outline. I cannot say it was of a human form, and yet it had more resemblance to a human form, or rather shadow, than to anything else. As it stood, wholly apart and distinct from the air and the light around it, its dimensions seemed gigantic, the summit nearly touching the ceiling. While I gazed, a feeling of intense cold seized me. An iceberg before me could not more have chilled me ; nor could the cold of an iceberg have been more purely physical. I feel convinced that it was not the cold caused by fear. As I continued to gaze, I thought—but this I cannot say with precision—that I distinguished two eyes looking down on me from the height. One moment I fancied that I distinguished them clearly, the next they seemed gone ; but still two rays of a pale-blue light frequently shot through the darkness, as from the height on which I half believed, half doubted, that I had encountered the eyes.

"I strove to speak—my voice utterly failed me ; I could only think to myself : "Is this fear ? it is *not* fear !" I strove to rise—in vain ; I felt as if weighed down by an irresistible force. Indeed, my impression was that of an immense and overwhelming Power opposed to my volition ; that sense of utter inadequacy to cope with a force beyond man's, which one may feel *physically* in a storm at sea, in a conflagration, or when confronting some terrible wild beast, or rather, perhaps, the shark of the ocean, I felt *morally*. Opposed to my will was another will, as far superior to its strength as storm, fire, and shark, are superior in material force to the force of man.

And now, as this impression grew on me—now came, at last, horror—horror to a degree that no words can convey. Still I retained pride, if not courage ; and in my own mind I said :

"This is horror, but it is not fear; unless I fear I cannot be harmed; my reason rejects this thing; it is an illusion—I do not fear." With a violent effort I succeeded at last in stretching out my hand towards the weapon on the table: as I did so, on the arm and shoulder I received a strange shock, and my arm fell to my side powerless. And now, to add to my horror, the light began slowly to wane from the candles—they were not, as it were, extinguished, but their flame seemed very gradually withdrawn: it was the same with the fire—the light was extracted from the fuel; in a few minutes the room was in utter darkness. The dread that came over me, to be thus in the dark with that dark Thing, whose power was so intensely felt, brought a reaction of nerve. In fact, terror had reached that climax, that either my senses must have deserted me, or I must have burst through the spell. I did burst through it. I found voice, though the voice was a shriek. I remember that I broke forth with words like these: "I do not fear, my soul does not fear"; and at the same time I found the strength to rise. Still in that profound gloom I rushed to one of the windows, tore aside the curtain, flung open the shutters; my first thought was—LIGHT. And when I saw the moon high, clear, and calm, I felt a joy that almost compensated for the previous terror. There was the moon, there, was also the light from the gas-lamps in the deserted, slumberous street. I turned to look back into the room; the moon penetrated its shadow very palely and partially—but still there was light. The dark Thing, whatever it might be, was gone—except that I could yet see a dim shadow, which seemed the shadow of that shade, against the opposite wall.

My eye now rested on the table, and from under the table (which was without cloth or cover—an old mahogany round table) there rose a hand, visible as far as the wrist. It was a hand, seemingly, as much of flesh and blood as my own, but the hand of an aged person, lean, wrinkled, small, too—a woman's hand. That hand very softly closed on the two letters that lay on the table: hand and letters both vanished. There then came the same three loud measured knocks I had heard at the bed-head before this extraordinary drama had commenced.

As those sounds slowly ceased, I felt the whole room vibrate sensibly; and at the far end there rose, as from the floor, sparks or globules like bubbles of light, many-colored—green, yellow, fire-red, azure. Up and down, to and fro, hither, thither, as tiny Will-o'-the-Wisps, the sparks moved, slow or swift, each

at its own caprice. A chair (as in the drawing-room below) was now advanced from the wall without apparent agency, and placed at the opposite side of the table. Suddenly, as forth from the chair, there grew a shape—a woman's shape. It was distinct as a shape of life, ghastly as a shape of death. The face was that of youth, with a strange, mournful beauty ; the throat and shoulders were bare, the rest of the form in a loose robe of cloudy white. It began sleeking its long yellow hair, which fell over its shoulders ; its eyes were not turned towards me, but to the door ; it seemed listening, watching, waiting. The shadow of the shade in the background grew darker ; and again I thought I beheld the eyes gleaming out from the summit of the shadow—eyes fixed upon that shape.

As if from the door, though it did not open, there grew out another shape, equally distinct, equally ghastly—a man's shape —a young man's. It was in the dress of the last century, or rather in a likeness of such dress (for both the male shape and the female, though defined, were evidently unsubstantial, impalpable—simulacra—phantasms); and there was something incongruous, yet fearful, in the contrast between the elaborate finery, the courtly position of that old-fashioned garb, with its ruffles and lace and buckles, and the corpse-like aspect and ghost-like stillness of the flitting wearer. Just as the male shape approached the female, the dark Shadow started from the wall, all three for a moment wrapped in darkness. When the pale light returned, the two phantoms were as if in the grasp of the shadow that towered between them ; and there was a blood-stain on the breast of the female ; and the phantom male was leaning on its phantom sword, and blood seemed trickling fast from the ruffles, from the lace ; and the darkness of the intermediate Shadow swallowed them up—they were gone. And again the bubbles of light shot, and sailed, and undulated, growing thicker and thicker and more wildly confused in their movements.

The closet door to the right of the fireplace now opened, and from the aperture there came the form of an aged woman. In her hand she held letters—the very letters over which I had seen *the* Hand close : and behind her I heard a footstep. She turned round as if to listen, and then she opened the letters and seemed to read : and over her shoulder I saw a livid face, the face of a man long drowned—bloated, bleached—seaweed tangled in its dripping hair ; and at her feet lay a form as of a corpse, and beside the corpse there cowered a child, a miserable squalid child, with famine in its cheeks and

fear in its eyes. And as I looked in the old woman's face, the wrinkles and lines vanished, and it became a face of youth—hard-eyed, stony, but still youth; and the Shadow darted forth, and darkened over the phantoms as it had darkened over the last.

Nothing now was left but the Shadow, and on that my eyes were intently fixed, till again eyes grew out of the Shadow—malignant, serpent eyes. And the bubbles of light again rose and fell, and in their disordered, irregular, turbulent maze, mingled with the wan moonlight. And now from those globules themselves, as from the shell of an egg, monstrous things burst out; the air grew filled with them; larvæ so bloodless and so hideous that I can in no way describe them except to remind the reader of the swarming life which the solar microscope brings before his eyes in a drop of water—things transparent, supple, agile, chasing each other, devouring each other—forms like nought ever beheld by the naked eye. As the shapes were without symmetry, so their movements were without order. In their very vagrancies there was no sport; they came round me and round, thicker and faster and swifter, swarming over my head, crawling over my right arm, which was outstretched in involuntary command against all evil beings. Sometimes I felt myself touched, but not by them; invisible hands touched me. Once I felt the clutch as of cold, soft fingers at my throat. I was still equally conscious that if I gave way to fear I should be in bodily peril; and I concentrated all my faculties in the single focus of resisting, stubborn will. And I turned my sight from the Shadow—above all, from those strange serpent eyes—eyes that had now become distinctly visible. For there, though in nought else around me, I was aware that there was a WILL, and a will of intense, creative, working evil, which might crush down my own.

The pale atmosphere in the room began now to redden as if in the air of some conflagration. The larvæ grew lurid as things that live in fire. Again the room vibrated; again were heard the three measured knocks; and again all things were swallowed up in the darkness of the dark Shadow, as if out of that darkness all had come, into that darkness all returned.

As the gloom receded, the Shadow was wholly gone. Slowly as it had been withdrawn, the flame grew again into the candles on the table, again into the fuel in the grate. The whole room came once more calmly, healthfully, into sight.

The two doors were still closed, the door communicating with the servant's room still locked. In the corner of the wall

into which he had so convulsively niched himself, lay the dog. I called to him—no movement; I approached—the animal was dead; his eyes protruded; his tongue out of his mouth; the froth gathered round his jaws. I took him in my arms; I brought him to the fire; I felt acute grief for the loss of my poor favorite—acute self-reproach; I accused myself of his death; I imagined he had died of fright. But what was my surprise on finding that his neck was actually broken. Had this been done in the dark? Must it not have been by a hand human as mine? Must there not have been a human agency all the while in that room? Good cause to suspect it. I cannot tell. I cannot do more than state the fact fairly; the reader my draw his own inference.

Another surprising circumstance—my watch was restored to the table from which it had been so mysteriously withdrawn; but it had stopped at the very moment it was so withdrawn; nor, despite all the skill of the watchmaker, has it ever gone since; that is, it will go in a strange erratic way for a few hours, and then come to a dead stop—it is worthless.

Nothing more chanced for the rest of the night. Nor, indeed, had I long to wait before the dawn broke. Nor till broad daylight did I quit the haunted house. Before I did so, I revisited the blind room in which my servant and myself had been for a long time imprisoned. I had a strong impression, for which I could not account, that from that room had originated the mechanism of the phenomena—if I may use the term—which had been experienced in my chamber. And though I entered it now in the clear day, with the sun peering through the filmy window, I still felt, as I stood on its floor, the creep of the horror which I had first there experienced the night before, and which had been so aggravated by what had passed in my own chamber. I could not, indeed, bear to stay more than half a minute within those walls. I descended the stairs, and again I heard the footfall before me; and when I opened the street door, I thought I could distinguish a very low laugh. I gained my own home, expecting to find my runaway servant there. But he had not presented himself; nor did I hear more of him for three days, when I received a letter from him, dated from Liverpool to this effect:

"Honored Sir:

I humbly entreat your pardon, though I can scarcely hope that you will think I deserve it, unless—which Heaven forbid—

you saw what I did. I feel that it will be years before I can recover myself, and as to being fit for service, it is out of the question. I am therefore going to my brother-in-law at Melbourne. The ship sails to-morrow. Perhaps the long voyage may set me up. I do nothing now but start and tremble, and fancy IT is behind me. I humbly beg you, honored sir, to order my clothes, and whatever wages are due to me, to be sent to my mother's at Walworth. John knows her address."

The letter ended with additional apologies, somewhat incoherent, and explanatory details as to effects that had been under the writer's charge.

This flight may perhaps warrant a suspicion that the man wished to go to Australia, and had been somehow or other fraudulently mixed up with the events of the night. I say nothing in refutation of that conjecture; rather, I suggest it as one that would seem to many persons the most probable solution of improbable occurrences. My belief in my own theory remained unshaken. I returned in the evening to the house, to bring away in a hack cab the things I had left there, with my poor dog's body. In this task I was not disturbed, nor did any incident worth note befall me, except that still, on ascending and descending the stairs, I heard the same footfall in advance. On leaving the house, I went to Mr. J.'s. He was at home. I returned him the keys, told him that my curiosity was sufficiently gratified, and was about to relate quickly what had passed, when he stopped me, and said, though with much politeness, that he had no longer any interest in a mystery which none had ever solved.

I determined at least to tell him of the two letters I had read, as well as of the extraordinary manner in which they had disappeared, and I then inquired if he thought they had been addressed to the woman who had died in the house, and if there were anything in her early history which could possibly confirm the dark suspicions to which the letters gave rise. Mr. J—— seemed startled, and, after musing a few moments, answered: "I am but little acquainted with the woman's earlier history, except, as I before told you, that her family were known to mine. But you revive some vague reminiscences to her prejudice. I will make inquiries, and inform you of their result. Still, even if we could admit the popular superstition that a person who had been either the perpetrator or the victim of dark crimes in life could revisit, as a restless spirit, the scene in which those crimes had been committed, I should observe that the house was infested by strange sights and sounds

before the the old woman died—you smile—what would you say?"

"I would say this, that I am convinced, if we could get to the bottom of these mysteries, we should find a living human agency."

"What! You believe it is all an imposture! For what object?"

"Not an imposture in the ordinary sense of the word. If suddenly I were to sink into a deep sleep, from which you could not awake me, but in that sleep could answer questions with an accuracy which I could not pretend to when awake—tell you what money you had in your pocket, nay, describe your very thoughts—it is not necessarily an imposture, any more than it is necessarily supernatural. I should be, unconsciously to myself, under a mesmeric influence, conveyed to me from a distance by a human being who had acquired power over me by previous *rapport*."

"But if a mesmerizer could so affect another living being, can you suppose that a mesmerizer could also affect inanimate objects: move chairs, open and shut doors?"

"Or impress our senses with the belief in such effects—we never having been *en rapport* with the person acting on us? No. What is commonly called mesmerism could not do this; but there may be a power akin to mesmerism, and superior to it—the power that in the old days was called Magic. That such a power may extend to all inanimate objects of matter, I do not say; but if so, it would not be against nature, it would be only a rare power in nature which might be given to constitutions with certain peculiarities, and cultivated by practice to an extraordinary degree. That such a power might extend over the dead—that is, over certain thoughts and memories that the dead may still retain—and compel, not that which ought properly to be called the Soul, and which is far beyond human reach, but rather a phantom of what has been most earth-stained on earth, to make itself apparent to our senses, is a very ancient though obsolete theory, upon which I will hazard no opinion. But I do not conceive the power would be supernatural. Let me illustrate what I mean from an experiment which Paracelsus describes as not difficult, and which the author of the "Curiosities of Literature" cites as credible: A flower perishes; you burn it. Whatever were the elements of that flower while it lived are gone, dispersed, you know not whither; you can never discover nor re-collect them. But you can, by chemistry, out of the burnt dust of that

flower, raise a spectrum of the flower, just as it seemed in life. It may be the same with human beings. The soul has as much escaped you as the essence or elements of the flower. Still you may make a spectrum of it. And this phantom, though in the popular superstition it is held to be the soul of the departed, must not be confounded with the true soul; it is but the eidolon of the dead form. Hence, like the best-attested stories of ghosts or spirits, the thing that most strikes us is the absence of what we hold to be soul; that is, of superior emancipated intelligence. These apparitions come for little or no object; they seldom speak when they do come; if they speak, utter no ideas above those of an ordinary person on earth. American spirit-seers have published volumes of communications in prose and verse, which they assert to be given in the names of the most illustrious dead—Shakspeare, Bacon—heaven knows whom. Those communications, taking the best, are certainly not a whit of higher order than would be communications from living persons of fair talent and education; they are wondrously inferior to what Bacon, Shakspeare, and Plato said and wrote when on earth. Nor, what is more noticeable, do they ever contain an idea that was not on the earth before. Wonderful, therefore, as such phenomena may be (granting them to be truthful), I see much that philosophy may question, nothing that it is incumbent on philosophy to deny, viz., nothing supernatural. They are but ideas conveyed somehow or other (we have not yet discovered the means) from one mortal brain to another. Whether, in so doing, tables walk of their own accord, or fiend-like shapes appear in a magic circle, or bodyless hands rise and remove material objects, or a Thing of Darkness, such as presented itself to me, freeze our blood—still am I persuaded that these are but agencies conveyed, as by electric wires, to my own brain from the brain of another. In some constitutions there is a natural chemistry, and these constitutions may produce chemic wonders; in others a natural fluid, call it electricity, and these may produce electric wonders. But the wonders differ from Normal Science in this: they are alike objectless, purposeless, puerile, frivolous. They lead on to no grand results; and therefore the world does not heed, and true sages have not cultivated them. But sure I am, that of all I saw or heard, a man, human as myself, was the remote originator; and I believe unconsciously to himself as to the exact effects produced, for this reason: no two persons, you say, have ever told you that they experienced exactly the same

thing. Well, observe, no two persons ever experience exactly the same dream. If this were an ordinary imposture, the machinery would be arranged for results that would but little vary; if it were a supernatural agency permitted by the Almighty, it would surely be for some definite end. These phenomena belong to neither class; my persuasion is, that they originate in some brain now far distant; that that brain had no distinct volition in anything that occurred; that what does occur reflects but its devious, motley, ever-shifting, half-formed thoughts; in short, that it has been but the dreams of such a brain put into action and invested with a semi-substance. That this brain is of immense power; that it can set matter into movement; that it is malignant and destructive, I believe; some material force must have killed my dog; the same force might, for aught I know, have sufficed to kill myself, had I been as subjugated by terror as the dog—had my intellect or my spirit given me no countervailing resistance in my will."

"It killed your dog! That is fearful! Indeed it is strange that no animal can be induced to stay in that house; not even a cat. Rats and mice are never found in it."

"The instincts of the brute creation detect influences deadly to their existence. Man's reason has a sense less subtle, because it has a resisting power more supreme. But enough; do you comprehend my theory?"

"Yes, though imperfectly—and I accept any crotchet (pardon the word), however odd, rather than embrace at once the notion of ghosts and hobgoblins we imbibed in our nurseries. Still, to my unfortunate house the evil is the same. What on earth can I do with the house?"

"I will tell you what I would do. I am convinced from my own internal feelings that the small unfurnished room at right angles to the door of the bedroom which I occupied, forms a starting-point or or receptacle for the influences which haunt the house; and I strongly advise you to have the walls opened, the floor removed—nay, the whole room pulled down. I observe that it is detached from the body of the house, built over the small back-yard, and could be removed without injury to the rest of the building."

"And you think, if I did that—"

"You would cut off the telegraph wires. Try it. I am so persuaded that am I right that I will pay half the expense if you will allow me to direct the operations."

"Nay, I am well able to afford the cost; for the rest, allow me to write to you."

About ten days afterwards I received a letter from Mr. J——, telling me that he had visited the house since I had seen him; that he had found the two letters I had described replaced in the drawer from which I had taken them; that he had read them with misgivings like my own; that he had instituted a cautious inquiry about the woman to whom I rightly conjectured they had been written. It seemed that thirty-six years ago (a year before the date of the letter) she had married, against the wish of her relations, an American of very suspicious character: in fact, he was generally believe to have been a pirate. She herself was the daughter of very respectable tradespeople, and had served in the capacity of a nursery governess before her marriage. She had a brother, a widower, who was considered wealthy, and who had one child of about six years old. A month after the marriage, the body of this brother was found in the Thames, near London Bridge; there seemed some marks of violence about his throat, but they were not deemed sufficient to warrant the inquest in any other verdict than that of "found drowned."

The American and his wife took charge of the little boy, the deceased brother having by his will left his sister the guardian of his only child—and in the event of the child's death, the sister inherited. The child died about six months afterwards—it was supposed to have been neglected and ill-treated. The neighbors deposed to have heard it shriek at night. The surgeon who had examined it after death, said that it was emaciated as if from want of nourishment, and the body was covered with livid bruises. It seemed that one winter night the child had sought to escape—crept out into the back-yard, tried to scale the wall, fallen back exhausted, and been found at morning on the stones in a dying state. But though there was some evidence of cruelty, there was none of murder; and the aunt and her husband had sought to palliate cruelty by alleging the exceeding stubbornness and perversity of the child, who was declared to be half-witted. Be that as it may, at the orphan's death the aunt inherited her brother's fortune. Before the first wedded year was out the American quitted England abruptly, and never returned to it. He obtained a cruising vessel, which was lost in the Atlantic two years afterwards. The widow was left in affluence; but reverses of various kinds had befallen her: a bank broke, an investment failed; she went into a small business and became insolvent; then she entered into service, sinking lower and lower, from housekeeper down to maid-of-all work—never long retaining a place, though nothing

decided against her character was ever alleged. She was considered sober, honest, and peculiarly quiet in her ways; still nothing prospered with her. And so she had dropped into the workhouse, from which Mr. J—— had taken her to be placed in charge of the very house which she had rented as mistress in the first year of her wedded life.

Mr. J—— added that he had passed an hour alone in the unfurnished room which I had urged him to destroy, and that his impressions of dread while there were so great, though he had neither heard nor seen anything, that he was eager to have the walls bared and the floors removed, as I had suggested. He had engaged persons for the work, and would commence any day I would name.

The day was accordingly fixed. I repaired to the haunted house; we went into the blind dreary room, took up the skirting, and then the floors. Under the rafters, covered with rubbish, was found a trap-door, quite large enough to admit a man. It was closely nailed down, with clamps and rivets of iron. On removing these we descended into a room below, the existence of which had never been suspected. In this room there had been a window and a flue, but they had been bricked over, evidently for many years. By the help of candles we examined this place; it still retained some mouldering furniture—three chairs, an oak settle, a table—all of the fashion of about eighty years ago. There was a chest of drawers against the wall, in which we found, half-rotted away, old-fashioned articles of a man's dress, such as might have been worn eighty or a hundred years ago by a gentleman of some rank—costly steel buckles and buttons, like those yet worn in court-dresses, a handsome court sword; in a waistcoat which had once been rich with gold-lace, but which was now blackened and foul with damp, we found five guineas, a few silver coins, and an ivory ticket, probably for some place of entertainment long since passed away. But our main discovery was in a kind of iron safe fixed to the wall, the lock of which it cost us much trouble to get picked.

In this safe were three shelves, and two small drawers. Ranged on the shelves were several small bottles of crystal, hermetically stopped. They contained colorless volatile essences, of which I shall only say that they were not poisons—phosphor and ammonia entered into some of them. There were also some very curious glass tubes, and a small pointed rod of iron, with a large lump of rock-crystal, and another of amber—also a loadstone of great power.

In one of the drawers we found a miniature portrait set in

gold, and retaining the freshness of its colors most remarkably, considering the length of time it had probably been there. The portrait was that of a man who might be somewhat advanced in middle life, perhaps forty-seven or forty-eight.

It was a remarkable face—a most impressive face. If you could fancy some mighty serpent transformed into a man, preserving in the human lineaments the old serpent type, you would have a better idea of that countenance than long descriptions can convey; the width and flatness of frontal; the tapering elegance of contour disguising the strength of the deadly jaw; the long, large, terrible eye, glittering and green as the emerald; and withal a certain ruthless calm, as if from the consciousness of an immense power.

Mechanically I turned round the miniature to examine the back of it, and on the back was engraved a pentacle; in the middle of the pentacle a ladder, and the third step of the ladder was formed by the date 1765. Examining still more minutely, I detected a spring; this, on being pressed, opened the back of the miniature as a lid. Within inside the lid were engraved, "Marianna to thee—be faithful in life and in death to——." Here follows a name that I will not mention, but it was not unfamiliar to me. I had heard it spoken of by old men in my childhood as the name borne by a dazzling charlatan who had made a great sensation in London for a year or so, and had fled the country on the charge of a double murder within his own house—that of his mistress and his rival. I said nothing of this to Mr. J——, to whom reluctantly I resigned the miniature.

We had found no difficulty in opening the first drawer within the iron safe; we found great difficulty in opening the second; it was not locked, but it resisted all efforts till we inserted in the chinks the edge of a chisel. When we had thus drawn it forth, we found a very singular apparatus in the nicest order. Upon a small thin book, or rather tablet, was placed a saucer of crystal: this saucer was filled with a clear liquid; on that liquid floated a kind of compass, with a needle shifting rapidly round; but instead of the usual points of a compass were seven strange characters, not very unlike those used by astrologers to denote the planets. A peculiar, but not strong nor displeasing, odor came from this drawer, which was lined with a wood that we afterwards discovered to be hazel. Whatever the cause of this odor, it produced a material effect on the nerves. We all felt it, even the two workmen who were in the room—a creeping, tingling sensation from the tips of the fingers to the

roots of the hair. Impatient to examine the tablet, I removed the saucer. As I did so the needle of the compass went round and round with exceeding swiftness and I felt a shock that ran through my whole frame, so that I dropped the saucer on the floor. The liquid was spilt, the saucer was broken, the compass rolled to the end of the room ; and at that instant the walls shook to and fro, as if a giant had swayed and rocked them.

The two workmen were so frightened that they ran up the ladder by which we had descended from the trap-door ; but seeing that nothing more happened, they were easily induced to return.

Meanwhile I had opened the tablet : it was bound in plain red leather, with a silver clasp ; it contained but one sheet of thick vellum, and on that sheet were inscribed, within a double pentacle, words in old monkish Latin, which are literally to be translated thus : " On all that it can reach within these walls—sentient or inanimate, living or dead—as moves the needle, so work my will ! Accursed be the house, and restless be the dwellers therein."

We found no more. Mr. J——burnt the tablet and its anathema. He razed to the foundations the part of the building containing the secret room with the chamber over it. He had then the courage to inhabit the house himself for a month, and a quieter, better-conditioned house could not be found in all London. Subsequently he let it to advantage, and his tenant has made no complaints.

THE END.

ZANONI

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

(LORD LYTTON)

INTERNATIONAL BOOK CO.,

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DEDICATORY EPISTLE.

First prefixed to the Edition of 1845.

TO JOHN GIBSON, R. A., SCULPTOR.

In looking round the wide and luminous circle of our great living Englishmen, to select one to whom I might fitly dedicate this work—one who, in his life as in his genius, might illustrate the principle I have sought to convey; elevated by the ideal which he exalts, and serenely dwelling in a glorious existence with the images born of his imagination—in looking round for some such man, my thoughts rested upon you. Afar from our turbulent cabals, from the ignoble jealousy and the sordid strife which degrade and acerbate the ambition of Genius, in your Roman home, you have lived amidst all that is loveliest and least perishable in the Past, and contributed, with the noblest aims, and in the purest spirit, to the mighty heirlooms of the Future. Your youth has been devoted to toil, that your manhood may be consecrated to fame—a fame unsullied by one desire of gold. You have escaped the two worst perils that beset the Artist in our time and land: the debasing tendencies of Commerce, and the angry rivalries of Competition. You have not wrought your marble for the market; you have not been tempted by the praises which our vicious criticism has showered upon exaggeration and distortion, to lower your taste to the level of the Hour; you have lived, and you have labored, as if you had no rivals, but in the Dead; no purchasers, save in judges of what is best. In the divine Priesthood of the Beautiful, you have sought only to increase her worshippers and enrich her temples. The pupil of Canova, you have inherited his excellences, while you have shunned his errors; yours his delicacy, not his affectation. Your heart resembles him even more than your genius: you have the same noble enthusiasm for your sublime profession, the same lofty freedom from envy and the spirit that depreciates; the same generous desire, not to war with, but to serve, Artists in your art; aiding, strengthening, advising, elevating the timidity of inexperience, and the vague aspirations of youth. By the intuition of a kindred mind, you have equalled the learning of Winckelman, and the plastic poetry of Goethe, in the intimate comprehension of the Antique. Each work of yours, rightly studied, is in itself a *criticism*, illustrating the sublime secrets of the Grecian Art, which, without the servility of plagiarism, you have contributed to revive amongst us; in you we behold its three great and long undetected principles: simplicity, calm, and concentration.

But your admiration of the Greeks has not led you to the bigotry of the mere Antiquarian, nor made you less sensible of the unappreciated excellence of the mighty Modern, worthy to be your countryman; though till his statue is in the streets of our capital, we show ourselves not worthy of the glory he has shed upon our land: you have not suffered even your gratitude to Canova to blind you to the superiority of Flaxman. When we become

sensible of our title-deeds to renown in that single name, we may look for an English public capable of real patronage to English Art, and not till then.

I, Artist in words, dedicate, then, to you, Artist whose ideas speak in marble, this well-loved work of my matured manhood. I love it not the less because it has been little understood, and superficially judged by the common herd. It was not meant for them. I love it not the more, because it has found enthusiastic favorers amongst the Few. My affection for my work is rooted in the solemn and pure delight which it gave me, to conceive and to perform. If I had graven it on the rocks of a desert, this apparition of my own innermost mind, in its least clouded moments, would have been to me as dear. And this ought, I believe, to be the sentiment with which he whose Art is born of faith in the truth and beauty of the principles he seeks to illustrate, should regard his work. Your serener existence, uniform and holy, my lot denies, if my heart covets. But our true nature is in our thoughts, not our deeds: and therefore, in Books which *are* his Thoughts—the Author's character lies bare to the discerning eye. It is not in the life of cities, in the turmoil and the crowd; it is in the still, the lonely, and more sacred life, which, for some hours, under every sun, the student lives (his stolen retreat from the Agora to the Cave), that I feel there is between us the bond of that secret sympathy, that magnetic chain, which unites the Everlasting Brotherhood, of whose being Zanoni is the type.

E. B. L.

London, *May*, 1845.

INTRODUCTION.

It is possible that, among my readers, there may be a few not unacquainted with an old bookshop, existing some years since in the neighborhood of Covent Garden ; I say a few, for certainly there was little enough to attract the many, in those precious volumes which the labor of a life had accumulated on the dusty shelves of my old friend D——. There were to be found no popular treatises, no entertaining romances, no histories, no travels, no "Library for the People," no "Amusement for the Million." But there, perhaps, throughout all Europe, the curious might discover the most notable collection ever amassed by an enthusiast of the works of Alchemist, Cabalist, and Astrologer. The owner had lavished a fortune in the purchase of unsalable treasures. But old D—— did not desire to sell. It absolutely went to his heart when a customer entered his shop ; he watched the movements of the presumptuous intruder with a vindictive glare ; he fluttered around him with uneasy vigilance ; he frowned, he groaned, when profane hands dislodged his idols from their niches. If it were one of the favorite sultanas of his wizard harem that attracted you, and the price named were not sufficiently enormous, he would not unfrequently double the sum. Demur, and in brisk delight he snatched the venerable charmer from your hands ; accede, and he became the picture of despair. Nor unfrequently, at the dead of night, would he knock at your door, and entreat you to sell him back, at your own terms, what you had so egregiously bought at his. A believer himself in his Averroes and Paracelsus, he was as loth as the philosophers he studied to communicate to the profane the learning he had collected.

It so chanced that some years ago, in my younger days, whether of authorship or life, I felt a desire to make myself acquainted with the true origin and tenets of the singular sect known by the name of Rosicrucians. Dissatisfied with the scanty and superficial accounts to be found in the works usually referred to on the subject, it struck me as possible that Mr. D——'s collection, which was rich not only in black letter, but in manuscripts, might contain some more accurate and authentic records of that famous brotherhood, written, who knows ? by one of their own order, and confirming by authority and detail the pretensions to wisdom and to virtue which Bringaret had arrogated to the successors of the Chaldean Gymnosophist. Accordingly I repaired to what, doubtless, I ought to be ashamed to confess, was once one of my favorite haunts. But are there no errors and no fallacies, in the chronicles of our own day, as absurd as those of the alchemists of old? Our very newspapers may seem to our posterity as full of delusions as the books of the alchemists do to us ;—not but what the Press is the air we breathe—and uncommonly foggy the air is too !

On entering the shop, I was struck by the venerable appearance of a customer whom I had never seen there before. I was struck yet more by the respect with which he was treated by the disdainful collector. "Sir," cried

the last emphatically, as I was turning over the leaves of the catalogue, "Sir, you are the only man I have met in five-and-forty years that I have spent in these researches who is worthy to be my customer. How—where, in this frivolous age, could you have acquired a knowledge so profound? And this august fraternity, whose doctrines, hinted at by the earliest philosophers, are still a mystery to the latest; tell me if there really exists upon the earth any book, any manuscript, in which their discoveries, their tenets, are to be learned?"

At the words "august fraternity" I need scarcely say that my attention had been at once aroused, and I listened eagerly for the stranger's reply.

"I do not think," said the old gentleman, "that the masters of the school have ever consigned, except by obscure hint and mystical parable, their real doctrines to the world. And I do not blame them for their discretion."

Here he paused, and seemed about to retire, when I said, somewhat abruptly, to the collector: "I see nothing, Mr. D——, in this catalogue, which relates to the Rosicrucians!"

"The Rosicrucians!" repeated the old gentleman, and in his turn he surveyed me with deliberate surprise. "Who but a Rosicrucian could explain the Rosicrucian mysteries! And can you imagine that any members of that sect, the most jealous of all secret societies, would themselves lift the veil that hides the Isis of their wisdom from the world?"

"Aha!" thought I, "this, then, is 'the august fraternity' of which you spoke. Heaven be praised! I certainly have stumbled on one of the brotherhood."

"But," I said, aloud, "if not in books, sir, where else am I to obtain information? Nowadays one can hazard nothing in print without authority, and one may scarcely quote Shakspeare without citing chapter and verse. This is the age of facts—the age of facts, sir."

"Well," said the old gentleman with a pleasant smile, "if we meet again, perhaps, at least, I may direct your researches to the proper source of intelligence." And with that he buttoned his great-coat, whistled to his dog, and departed.

It so happened that I did meet again with the old gentleman exactly four days after our brief conversation in Mr. D——'s bookshop. I was riding leisurely towards Highgate, when at the foot of its classic hill I recognized the stranger; he was mounted on a black pony, and before him trotted his dog, which was black also.

If you meet the man whom you wish to know, on horseback, at the commencement of a long hill, where, unless he has borrowed a friend's favorite hack, he cannot in decent humanity to the brute creation ride away from you, I apprehend that it is your own fault if you have not gone far in your object before you have gained the top. In short, so well did I succeed that, on reaching Highgate, the old gentleman invited me to rest at his house, which was a little apart from the village; and an excellent house it was; small, but commodious, with a large garden, and commanding from the windows such a prospect as Lucretius would recommend to philosophers; the spires and domes of London, on a clear day, distinctly visible; here the Retreat of the Hermit, and there the Mare Magnum of the world.

The walls of the principal rooms were embellished with pictures of extraordinary merit, and in that high school of art which is so little understood out of Italy. I was surprised to learn that they were all from the hand of the owner. My evident admiration pleased my new friend, and led to talk upon his part, which showed him no less elevated in his theories of art than

an adept in the practice. Without fatiguing the reader with irrelevant criticism, it is necessary, perhaps, as elucidating much of the design and character of the work which these prefatory pages introduce, that I should briefly observe, that he insisted as much upon the Connection of the Arts, as a distinguished author has upon that of the Sciences; that he held that in all works of imagination, whether expressed by words or by colors, the artist of the higher schools must make the broadest distinction between the Real and the True; in other words, between the imitation of actual life, and the exaltation of Nature into the Ideal.

"The one," said he, "is the Dutch School, the other is the Greek."

"Sir," said I, "the Dutch is the most in fashion."

"Yes, in painting, perhaps," answered my host, "but in literature—"

"It was of literature I spoke. Our growing poets are all for simplicity and Betty Foy; and our critics hold it the highest praise of a work of imagination, to say that its characters are exact to common life. Even in sculpture—"

"In sculpture! No—no! *There* the high ideal must at least be essential!"

"Pardon me; I fear you have not seen Souter Johnny and Tam O'-Shanter."

"Ah!" said the old gentleman, shaking his head, "I live very much out of the world, I see. I suppose Shakspeare has ceased to be admired?"

"On the contrary; people make the adoration of Shakspeare the excuse for attacking everybody else. But then our critics have discovered that Shakspeare is so *real!*"

"Real! The poet who has never once drawn a character to be met with in actual life; who has never once descended to a passion that is false, or a personage who is real!"

I was about to reply very severely to this paradox, when I perceived that my companion was growing a little out of temper. And he who wishes to catch a Rosicrucian, must take care not to disturb the waters. I thought it better, therefore, to turn the conversation.

"*Revenons à nos moutons*," said I; "you promised to enlighten my ignorance as to the Rosicrucians."

"Well," quoth he, rather sternly; "but for what purpose? Perhaps you desire only to enter the temple in order to ridicule the rites?"

"What do you take me for! Surely, were I so inclined, the fate of the Abbé de Villars is a sufficient warning to all men not to treat idly of the realms of the Salamander and the Sylph. Everybody knows how mysteriously that ingenious personage was deprived of his life, in revenge for the witty mockeries of his Comte de Gabalis."

"Salamander and Sylph! I see that you fall into the vulgar error, and translate literally the allegorical language of the mystics."

With that the old gentleman condescended to enter into a very interesting, and, as it seemed to me, a very erudite relation, of the tenets of the Rosicrucians, some of whom, he asserted, still existed, and still prosecuted in august secresy their profound researches into natural science and occult philosophy.

"But this fraternity," said he, "however respectable and virtuous—virtuous I say, for no monastic order is more severe in the practice of moral precepts, or more ardent in Christian faith—this fraternity is but a branch of others yet more transcendent in the powers they have obtained, and yet more illustrious in their origin. Are you acquainted with the Platonists?"

"I have occasionally lost my way in their labyrinth," said I, "Faith, they are rather difficult gentlemen to understand."

"Yet their knottiest problems have never yet been published. Their sublimest works are in manuscript, and constitute the initiatory learning, not only of the Rosicrucians, but of the nobler brotherhoods I have referred to. More solemn and sublime still is the knowledge to be gleaned from the elder Pythagoreans, and the immortal masterpieces of Apollonius."

"Apollonius the impostor of Tyanea! Are his writings extant?"

"Impostor!" cried my host; "Apollonius an impostor!"

"I beg your pardon; I did not know he was a friend of yours; and if you vouch for his character, I will believe him to have been a very respectable man, who only spoke the truth when he boasted of his power to be in two places at the same time."

"Is that so difficult?" said the old gentleman; "if so, you have never dreamed!"

Here ended our conversation; but from that time an acquaintance was formed between us, which lasted till my venerable friend departed this life. Peace to his ashes! He was a person of singular habits and eccentric opinions; but the chief part of his time was occupied in acts of quiet and unostentatious goodness. He was an enthusiast in the duties of the Samaritan; and as his virtues were softened by the gentlest charity, so his hopes were based upon the devoutest belief. He never conversed upon his own origin and history, nor have I ever been able to penetrate the darkness in which they were concealed. He seemed to have seen much of the world, and to have been an eye-witness of the first French Revolution, a subject upon which he was equally eloquent and instructive. At the same time, he did not regard the crimes of that stormy period with the philosophical leniency with which enlightened writers (their heads safe upon their shoulders) are, in the present day, inclined to treat the massacres of the past: he spoke not as a student who had read and reasoned, but as a man who had seen and suffered. The old gentleman seemed alone in the world; nor did I know that he had one relation, till his executor, a distant cousin, residing abroad, informed me of the very handsome legacy which my poor friend had bequeathed me. This consisted first of a sum about which I think it best to be guarded, foreseeing the possibility of a new tax upon real and funded property; and secondly, of certain precious manuscripts, to which the following volumes owe their existence.

I imagine I trace this latter bequest to a visit I paid the Sage, if so I may be permitted to call him, a few weeks before his death.

Although he read little of our modern literature, my friend, with the affable good-nature which belonged to him, graciously permitted me to consult him upon various literary undertakings meditated by the desultory ambition of a young and inexperienced student. And at that time I sought his advice upon a work of imagination, intended to depict the effects of enthusiasm upon different modifications of character. He listened to my conception, which was sufficiently trite and prosaic, with his usual patience; and then, thoughtfully turning to his bookshelves, took down an old volume, and read to me, first in Greek, and secondly in English, some extracts to the following effect:

"Plato here expresses four kinds of Mania, by which I desire to understand enthusiasm, and the inspiration of the gods. Firstly, the musical; secondly, the telestic or mystic; thirdly, the prophetic; and fourthly, that which belongs to Love."

The Author he quoted, after contending that there is something in the soul above intellect, and stating that there are in our nature distinct energies, by the one of which we discover and seize as it were on sciences and theo-

rems with almost intuitive rapidity, by another, through which high art is accomplished, like the statues of Phidias, proceeded to state, that "enthusiasm, in the true acceptation of the word, is, when that part of the soul which is above intellect is excited to the gods, and thence derives its inspiration."

The Author then, pursuing his comment upon Plato, observes, that "one of these manias may suffice (especially that which belongs to Love) to lead back the soul to its first divinity and happiness; but that there is an intimate union with them all: and that the ordinary progress through which the soul ascends is, primarily, through the musical; next, through the telestic or mystic; thirdly, through the prophetic; and lastly, through the enthusiasm of Love."

While with a bewildered understanding and a reluctant attention, I listened to these intricate sublimities, my adviser closed the volume, and said with complacency: "There is the motto for your book, the thesis for your theme."

"*Davus sum, non Œdipus*," said I, shaking my head discontentedly. "All this may be exceedingly fine, but, Heaven forgive me, I don't understand a word of it. The mysteries of your Rosicrucians, and your fraternities, are mere child's play to the jargon of the Platonists."

"Yet, not till you rightly understand this passage can you understand the higher theories of the Rosicrucians, or of the still nobler fraternities you speak of with so much levity."

"Oh, if that be the case, I give up in despair. Why not, since you are so well versed in the matter, take the motto for a book of your own?"

"But if I have already composed a book with that thesis for its theme, will you prepare it for the public?"

"With the greatest pleasure," said I,—alas, too rashly!

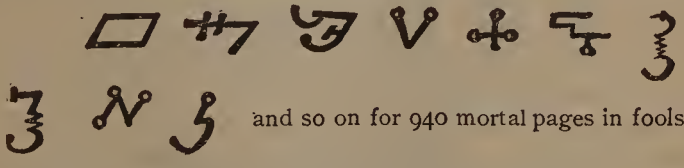
"I shall hold you to your promise," returned the old gentleman, "and when I am no more, you will receive the manuscripts. From what you say of the prevailing taste in literature, I cannot flatter you with the hope that you will gain much by the undertaking. And I tell you beforehand that you will find it not a little laborious."

"Is your work a romance?"

"It is a romance, and it is not a romance. It is a truth for those who can comprehend it, and an extravagance for those who cannot."

At last there arrived the manuscripts, with a brief note from my deceased friend, reminding me of my imprudent promise.

With mournful interest, and yet with eager impatience, I opened the packet and trimmed my lamp. Conceive my dismay when I found the whole written in an unintelligible cipher. I present the reader with a specimen:



and so on for 940 mortal pages in foolscap. I could scarcely believe my eyes; in fact, I began to think the lamp burned singularly blue; and sundry misgivings as to the unhallowed nature of the characters I had so unwittingly opened upon, coupled with the strange hints and mystical language of the old gentleman, crept through my disordered imagination. Certainly, to say no worse of it, the whole thing looked un-

canny! I was about, precipitately, to hurry the papers into my desk, with a pious determination to have nothing more to do with them, when my eye fell upon a book, neatly bound in blue morocco, and which in my eagerness I had hitherto overlooked. I opened this volume with great precaution, not knowing what might jump out, and, guess my delight, found that it contained a key or dictionary to the hieroglyphics. Not to weary the reader with an account of my labors, I am contented with saying that at last I imagined myself capable of construing the characters, and set to work in good earnest. Still it was no easy task, and two years elapsed before I had made much progress. I then, by way of experiment on the public, obtained the insertion of a few desultory chapters in a periodical with which, for a few months, I had the honor to be connected. They appeared to excite more curiosity than I had presumed to anticipate; and I renewed, with better heart, my laborious undertaking. But now a new misfortune befel me: I found as I proceeded that the Author had made two copies of his work, one much more elaborate and detailed than the other; I had stumbled upon the earlier copy, and had my whole task to re-model, and the chapters I had written to re-translate. I may say then, that, exclusive of intervals devoted to more pressing occupations, my unlucky promise cost me the toil of several years before I could bring it to adequate fulfilment. The task was the more difficult, since the style in the original is written in a kind of rhythmical prose, as if the author desired that in some degree his work should be regarded as one of poetical conception and design. To this it was not possible to do justice, and in the attempt I have, doubtless, very often need of the reader's indulgent consideration. My natural respect for the old gentleman's vagaries with a muse of equivocal character must be my only excuse, whenever the language, without luxuriating into verse, borrows flowers scarcely natural to prose. Truth compels me also to confess that, with all my pains, I am by no means sure that I have invariably given the true meaning of the cipher; nay, that here and there either a gap in the narrative, or the sudden assumption of a new cipher, to which no key was afforded, has obliged me to resort to interpolations of my own, no doubt easily discernible, but which, I flatter myself, are not inharmonious to the general design. This confession leads me to the sentence with which I shall conclude: If, reader, in this book there be anything that pleases you, it is certainly mine; but whenever you come to something you dislike, lay the blame upon the old gentleman!

London, *January*, 1842.

N. B.—The notes appended to the text are sometimes by the Author, sometimes by the Editor. I have occasionally (but not always) marked the distinction; where, however, this is omitted, the ingenuity of the Reader will be rarely at fault.

ZANONI.

BOOK I.—THE MUSICIAN.

"Due Fontane
Che di diverso effetto hanno liquore!" *
—ARIOSTO, *Orland. Fur.*, Canto i. 7.

Two Founts
That hold a draught of different effects.

CHAPTER I.

"Vergina era
D'alta beltà, ma sua beltà non cura!
* * * * * *
Di natura, d'amor, de 'cieli amici
Le negligenze sue sono artifici." *
—*Gerusal. Lib.*, canto ii., xiv.—xviii.

AT Naples, in the latter half of the last century, a worthy artist named Gaetano Pisani lived and flourished. He was a musician of great genius, but not of popular reputation; there was in all his compositions something capricious and fantastic, which did not please the taste of the dilettanti of Naples. He was fond of unfamiliar subjects, into which he introduced airs and symphonies that excited a kind of terror in those who listened. The names of his pieces will probably suggest their nature. I find, for instance, among his MSS., these titles, "The Feast of the Harpies," "The Witches at Benevento," "The Descent of Orpheus into Hades," "The Evil Eye," "The Eumenides," and many others that evince a powerful imagination, delighting in the fearful and supernatural, but often relieved, by an airy and delicate fancy, with passages of exquisite grace and beauty. It is true that in the selection of his subjects from ancient fable, Gaetano Pisani was much more faithful than his contemporaries to the remote origin and the early genius of Italian Opera. That descendant,

* She was a virgin of a glorious beauty, but regarded not her beauty. . . . Negligence itself is art in those favored by nature, by love, and by the heavens.

however effeminate, of the ancient union between Song and Drama, when, after long obscurity and dethronement, it regained a punier sceptre, though a gaudier purple, by the banks of the Etrurian Arno, or amidst the Lagunes of Venice, had chosen all its primary inspirations from the unfamiliar and classic sources of heathen legend; and Pisani's "Descent of Orpheus" was but a bolder, darker, and more scientific repetition of the "Euridice" which Jacopi Peri set to music at the august nuptials of Henry of Navarre and Mary of Medicis.* Still, as I have said, the style of the Neapolitan musician was not on the whole pleasing to ears grown nice and euphuistic in the more dulcet melodies of the day; and faults and extravagances easily discernible, and often to appearance wilful, served the critics for an excuse for their distaste. Fortunately, or the poor musician might have starved, he was not only a composer, but also an excellent practical performer, especially on the violin, and by that instrument he earned a decent subsistence as one of the orchestra at the Great Theatre of San Carlo. Here, formal and appointed tasks necessarily kept his eccentric fancies in tolerable check, though it is recorded that no less than five times he had been deposed from his desk for having shocked the *conoscênti*, and thrown the whole band into confusion, by impromptu variations of so frantic and startling a nature that one might well have imagined that the harpies or witches who inspired his compositions had clawed hold of his instrument. The impossibility, however, to find any one of equal excellence as a performer (that is to say, in his more lucid and orderly moments), had forced his reinstalment, and he had now, for the most part, reconciled himself to the narrow sphere of his appointed adagios or allegros. The audience, too, aware of his propensity, were quick to perceive the least deviation from the text; and if he wandered for a moment, which might also be detected by the eye as well as the ear, in some strange contortion of visage, and some ominous flourish of his bow, a gentle and admonitory murmur recalled the musician from his Elysium or his Tartarus, to the sober regions of his desk. Then he would start as if from a dream, cast a hurried, frightened, apologetic glance around, and, with a crestfallen, humbled air, draw his rebellious instrument back to the beaten track of the glib monotony. But at home he would make himself amends for this reluctant drudgery. And there, grasping the unhappy

* Orpheus was the favorite hero of early Italian Opera, or Lyrical Drama. The Orfeo of Angelo Politiano was produced 1475. The Orfeo of Monteverde was performed at Venice in 1667.

violin with ferocious fingers, he would pour forth, often till the morning rose, strange wild measures, that would startle the early fisherman on the shore below with a superstitious awe, and make him cross himself as if mermaid or sprite had wailed no earthly music in his ear.

This man's appearance was in keeping with the characteristics of his art. The features were noble and striking, but worn and haggard, with black, careless locks, tangled into a maze of curls, and a fixed, speculative, dreamy stare in his large and hollow eyes. All his movements were peculiar, sudden, and abrupt, as the impulse seized him ; and in gliding through the streets, or along the beach, he was heard laughing and talking to himself. Withal, he was a harmless, guileless, gentle creature, and would share his mite with any idle lazzaroni, whom he often paused to contemplate as they lay lazily basking in the sun. Yet was he thoroughly unsocial. He formed no friends, flattered no patrons, resorted to none of the merry-makings, so dear to the children of music and the South. He and his art seemed alone suited to each other ; both quaint, primitive, unworldly, irregular. You could not separate the man from his music ; it was himself. Without it, he was nothing, a mere machine ! *With* it, he was king over worlds of his own. Poor man, he had little enough in this ! At a manufacturing town in England there is a gravestone, on which the epitaph records "one Claudius Phillips, whose absolute contempt for riches, and inimitable performance on the violin, made him the admiration of all that knew him !" Logical conjunction of opposite eulogies ! In proportion, O Genius, to thy contempt for riches, will be thy performance on thy violin !

Gaetano Pisani's talents as a composer had been chiefly exhibited in music appropriate to this his favorite instrument, of all unquestionably the most various and royal in its resources and power over the passions. As Shakspeare among poets, is the Cremona among instruments. Nevertheless, he had composed other pieces, of larger ambition and wider accomplishment, and chief of these, his precious, his unpurchased, his unpublished, his unpublishable and imperishable opera of the "Siren." This great work had been the dream of his boyhood, the mistress of his manhood ; in advancing age "it stood beside him like his youth." Vainly had he struggled to place it before the world. Even bland, unjealous Paisiello, Maestro di Capella, shook his gentle head when the musician favored him with a specimen of one of his most thrilling scenas. And yet, Paisi-

ello, though that music differs from all Durante taught thee to emulate, there may—but patience, Gaetano Pisani !—bide thy time, and keep thy violin in tune !

Strange as it may appear to the fairer reader, this grotesque personage had yet formed those ties which ordinary mortals are apt to consider their especial monopoly : he was married, and had one child. What is more strange yet, his wife was a daughter of quiet, sober, unfantastic England ; she was much younger than himself ; she was fair and gentle, with a sweet English face ; she had married him from choice and (will you believe it?) she loved him. How she came to marry him, or how this shy, unsocial, wayward creature ever ventured to propose, I can only explain by asking you to look round and explain first to *me* how half the husbands and half the wives you meet ever found a mate ! Yet on reflection this union was not so extraordinary after all. The girl was a natural child of parents too noble ever to own and claim her. She was brought into Italy to learn the art by which she was to live, for she had taste and voice ; she was a dependent, and harshly treated, and poor Pisani was her master, and his voice the only one she had heard from her cradle, that seemed without one tone that could scorn or chide. And so—well, is the rest natural? Natural or not, they married. This young wife loved her husband ; and young and gentle as she was, she might almost be said to be the protector of the two. From how many disgraces with the despots of San Carlo and the Conservatorio had her unknown, officious mediation saved him ! In how many ailments—for his frame was weak—had she nursed and tended him ! Often, in the dark nights, she would wait at the theatre, with her lanthorn to light him, and her steady arm to lean on ; otherwise, in his abstract reveries, who knows but the musician would have walked after his "Siren," into the sea ! And then she would so patiently, perhaps (for in true love there is not always the finest taste), so *delightedly* listen to those storms of eccentric and fitful melody, and steal him, whispering praises all the way, from the unwholesome night-watch to rest and sleep ! I said his music was a part of the man, and this gentle creature seemed a part of the music ; it was, in fact, when she sate beside him that whatever was tender or fairy-like in his motley fantasia crept into the harmony as by stealth. Doubtless her presence acted on the music, and shaped and softened it ; but he, who never examined how or what his inspiration, knew it not. All that he knew was, that he loved and blessed her. He fancied that he told her so twenty times a day ; but

he never did, for he was not of many words, even to his wife. His language was his music, as hers, her cares! He was more communicative to his *barbiton*, as the learned Mersennus teaches us to call all the varieties of the great viol family. Certainly barbiton sounds better than fiddle; and barbiton let it be. He would talk to *that* by the hour together: praise it, scold it, coax it, nay (for such is man, even the most guileless), he had been known to swear at it; but for that excess he was always penitentially remorseful. And the barbiton had a tongue of his own, could take his own part, and when *he* also scolded, had much the best of it.

He was a noble fellow, this Violin! A Tyrolese, the handiwork of the illustrious Steiner. There was something mysterious in his great age. How many hands, now dust, had awakened his strings ere he became the Robin Goodfellow and Familiar of Gaetano Pisani! His very case was venerable; beautifully painted, it was said, by Caracci, An English collector had offered more for the case than Pisani had ever made by the violin. But Pisani, who cared not if he had inhabited a cabin himself, was proud of a palace for the barbiton. His barbiton, it was his elder child! He had another child, and now we must turn to her.

How shall I describe thee, Viola? Certainly the music had something to answer for in the advent of that young stranger. For both in her form and her character you might have traced a family likeness to that singular and spirit-like life of sound which night after night threw itself in airy and goblin sport over the starry seas . . . . Beautiful she was, but of a very uncommon beauty: a combination, a harmony of opposite attributes. Her hair of a gold richer and purer than that which is seen even in the North; but the eyes, of all the dark, tender, subduing light of more than Italian—almost of oriental—splendor. The complexion exquisitely fair, but never the same: vivid in one moment, pale the next. And with the complexion the expression also varied; and nothing now so joyous.

I grieve to say that what we rightly entitle education was much neglected for their daughter by this singular pair. To be sure, neither of them had much knowledge to bestow: and knowledge was not then the fashion, as it is now. But accident or nature favored Viola. She learned, as of course, her mother's language with her father's. And she contrived soon to read and to write: and her mother, who, by the way, was a Roman Catholic, taught her betimes to pray. But then, to counteract all these acquisitions, the strange habits of Pisani,

and the incessant watch and care which he required from his wife, often left the child alone with an old nurse ; who, to be sure, loved her dearly, but who was in no way calculated to instruct her. Dame Gionetta was every inch Italian and Neapolitan. Her youth had been all love, and her age was all superstition. She was garrulous, fond, a gossip. Now she would prattle to the girl of cavaliers and princes at her feet, and now she would freeze her blood with tales and legends, perhaps as old as Greek or Etrurian fable, of demon and vampire, of the dances round the great walnut-tree at Benevento, and the haunting spell of the Evil Eye. All this helped silently to weave charmed webs over Viola's imagination, that afterthought and later years might labor vainly to dispel. And all this especially fitted her to hang, with a fearful joy, upon her father's music. Those visionary strains, ever struggling to translate into wild and broken sounds the language of unearthly beings, breathed around her from her birth. Thus you might have said that her whole mind was full of music : associations, memories, sensations of pleasure or pain, all were mixed up inexplicably with those sounds that now delighted, and now terrified ; that greeted her when her eyes opened to the sun, and woke her trembling on her lonely couch in the darkness of the night. The legends and tales of Gionetta only served to make the child better understand the signification of those mysterious tones ; they furnished her with words to the music.

It was natural that the daughter of such a parent should soon evince some taste in his art. But this developed itself chiefly in the ear and the voice. She was yet a child when she sang divinely. A great cardinal,—great alike in the State and the Conservatorio—heard of her gifts, and sent for her. From that moment her fate was decided : she was to be the future glory of Naples, the prima donna of San Carlo. The Cardinal insisted upon the accomplishment of his own predictions, and provided her with the most renowned masters. To inspire her with emulation, his Eminence took her one evening to his own box : it would be something to see the performance, something more to hear the applause lavished upon the glittering signoras she was hereafter to excel ! Oh, how gloriously that Life of the Stage, that fairy World of Music and Song, dawned upon her ! It was the only world that seemed to correspond with her strange childish thoughts. It appeared to her as if, cast hitherto on a foreign shore, she was brought at last to see the forms and hear the language of her native land. Beautiful

and true enthusiasm, rich with the promise of genius! Boy or man, thou wilt never be a poet, if thou hast not felt the ideal, the romance, the Calypso's isle that opened to thee, when for the first time the magic curtain was drawn aside, and let in the World of Poetry on the World of Prose!

And now the initiation was begun. She was to read, to study, to depict by a gesture, a look, the passions she was to delineate on the boards; lessons dangerous, in truth, to some, but not to the pure enthusiasm that comes from Art; for the mind that rightly conceives Art is but a mirror, which gives back what is cast on its surface faithfully only—while unsullied. She seized on nature and truth intuitively. Her recitations became full of unconscious power; her voice moved the heart to tears, or warmed it into generous rage. But this arose from that sympathy which genius ever has, even in its earliest innocence, with whatever feels, or aspires, or suffers. It was no premature woman comprehending the love or the jealousy that the words expressed; her art was one of those strange secrets which the psychologists may unriddle to us if they please, and tell us why children of the simplest minds and the purest hearts are often so acute to distinguish, in the tales you tell them, or the songs you sing, the difference between the true Art and the False, Passion and Jargon, Homer and Racine; echoing back, from hearts that have not yet felt what they repeat, the melodious accents of the natural pathos. Apart from her studies, Viola was a simple, affectionate, but somewhat wayward, child; wayward, not in temper, for that was sweet and docile, but in her moods, which, as I before hinted, changed from sad to gay and from gay to sad without an apparent cause. If cause there were, it must be traced to the early and mysterious influences I have referred to, when seeking to explain the effect produced on her imagination by those restless streams of sound that constantly played around it: for it is noticeable, that to those who are much alive to the effects of music, airs and tunes often come back, in the commonest pursuits of life, to vex, as it were, and haunt them. Then music, once admitted to the soul, becomes also a sort of spirit, and never dies. It wanders perturbedly through the halls and galleries of the memory, and is often heard again, distinct and living as when it first displaced the wavelets of the air. Now at times, then, these phantoms of sound floated back upon her fancy; if gay, to call a smile from every dimple; if mournful, to throw a shade upon her brow, to make her cease from her childish mirth, and sit apart and muse.

Rightly, then, in a typical sense, might this fair creature, so airy in her shape, so harmonious in her beauty, so unfamiliar in her ways and thoughts—rightly might she be called a daughter, less of the Musician than the Music: a being for whom you could imagine that some fate was reserved, less of actual life than the romance which, to eyes that can see, and hearts that can feel, glides ever along *with* the actual life, stream by stream, to the Dark Ocean.

And therefore it seemed not strange that Viola herself, even in childhood, and yet more as she bloomed into the sweet seriousness of virgin youth, should fancy her life ordained for a lot, whether of bliss or woe, that should accord with the romance and revery which made the atmosphere she breathed. Frequently she would climb through the thickets that clothed the neighboring grotto of Posilipo—the mighty work of the old Cimmerians,—and, seated by the haunted tomb of Virgil, indulge those visions, the subtle vagueness of which no poetry can render palpable and defined: for the Poet that surpasses all who ever sung, is the Heart of dreaming Youth! Frequently there, too, beside the threshold over which the vine-leaves clung, and facing that dark-blue, waveless sea, she would sit in the autumn noon or summer twilight, and build her castles in the air. Who doth not do the same, not in youth alone, but with the dimmed hopes of age! It is man's prerogative to dream, the common royalty of peasant and of king. But those day-dreams of hers were more habitual, distinct, and solemn, than the greater part of us indulge. They seemed like the Orama of the Greeks—prophets while phantasms.

CHAPTER II.

"Fu stupor, fu vaghezza, fu diletto!"*
—*Gerusal. Lib.*, cant. ii. xxi.

Now at last the education is accomplished! Viola is nearly sixteen. The Cardinal declares that the time is come when the new name must be inscribed in the Libro d'Oro—the Golden Book set apart to the children of Art and Song. Yes, but in what character? to whose genius is she to give embodiment and form? Ah, there is the secret! Rumors go abroad that the inexhaustible Paisiello, charmed with her performance of his *Nel cor piu non me sento*, and his *Io son Lindoro*, will produce some new masterpiece to introduce the debutante. Others

* Desire it was, 'twas wonder, 'twas delight.—WIFFEN'S translation.

insist upon it that her forte is the comic, and that Cimarosa is hard at work at another *Matrimonio Segreto*. But in the meanwhile there is a check in the diplomacy somewhere. The Cardinal is observed to be out of humor. He has said publicly, and the words are portentous: "The silly girl is as mad as her father—what she asks is preposterous!" Conference follows conference—the Cardinal talks to the poor child very solemnly in his closet—all in vain. Naples is distracted with curiosity and conjecture. The lecture ends in a quarrel, and Viola comes home sullen and pouting: she will not act, she has renounced the engagement.

Pisani, too inexperienced to be aware of all the dangers of the stage, had been pleased at the notion that one, at least, of his name, would add celebrity to his art. The girl's perverseness displeased him. However, he said nothing; he never scolded in words, but he took up the faithful barbiton. Oh, faithful barbiton, how horribly thou didst scold! It screeched, it gabbled, it moaned, it growled. And Viola's eyes filled with tears, for she understood that language. She stole to her mother, and whispered in her ear; and when Pisani turned from his employment, lo! both mother and daughter were weeping. He looked at them with a wondering stare; and then, as if he felt he had been harsh, he flew again to his familiar. And now you thought you heard the lullaby which a fairy might sing to some fretful changeling it had adopted and sought to soothe. Liquid, low, silvery, streamed the tones beneath the enchanted bow. The most stubborn grief would have paused to hear; and withal, at times, out came a wild, merry, ringing note, like a laugh, but not mortal laughter. It was one of his most successful airs from his beloved opera: the Siren in the act of charming the waves and the winds to sleep. Heaven knows what next would have come, but his arm was arrested. Viola had thrown herself on his breast, and kissed him, with happy eyes that smiled through her sunny hair. At that very moment the door opened—a message from the Cardinal. Viola must go to his Eminence at once. Her mother went with her. All was reconciled and settled; Viola had her way, and selected her own opera. O ye dull nations of the North, with your broils and debates, your bustling lives of the Pnyx and the Agora, you cannot guess what a stir throughout musical Naples was occasioned by the rumor of a new opera and a new singer. But whose the opera? No cabinet intrigue ever was so secret. Pisani came back one night from the theatre evidently disturbed and irate. Woe to thine ears

hadst thou heard the barbiton that night! They had suspended him from his office; they feared that the new opera, and the first *début* of his daughter as prima donna, would be too much for his nerves. And his variations, his diablerie of sirens and harpies, on such a night, made a hazard not to be contemplated without awe. To be set aside, and on the very night that his child, whose melody was but an emanation of his own, was to perform—set aside for some new rival—it was too much for a musician's flesh and blood. For the first time he spoke in words upon the subject, and gravely asked—for that question the barbiton, eloquent as it was, could not express distinctly—what was to be the opera, and what the part? And Viola as gravely answered that she was pledged to the Cardinal not to reveal. Pisani said nothing, but disappeared with the violin; and presently they heard the Familiar from the housetop (whither, when thoroughly out of humor, the Musician sometimes fled), whining and sighing as if its heart were broken.

The affections of Pisani were little visible on the surface. He was not one of those fond, caressing fathers whose children are ever playing round their knees; his mind and soul were so thoroughly in his art, that domestic life glided by him, seemingly as if *that* were a dream, and the heart the substantial form and body of existence. Persons much cultivating an abstract study are often thus; mathematicians proverbially so. When his servant ran to the celebrated French philosopher, shrieking, "The house is on fire, sir!" "Go and tell my wife then, fool!" said the wise man, settling back to his problems; "do *I* ever meddle with domestic affairs?" But what are mathematics to music—music, that not only composes operas, but plays on the barbiton? Do you know what the illustrious Giardini said when the tyro asked how long it would take to learn to play on the violin? Hear, and despair, ye who would bend the bow to which that of Ulysses was a plaything: "Twelve hours a day, for twenty years together!" Can a man, then, who plays the barbiton be always playing also with his little ones? No, Pisani! often, with the keen susceptibility of childhood, poor Viola had stolen from the room to weep at the thought that thou didst not love her. And yet, underneath this outward abstraction of the artist, the natural fondness flowed all the same; and as she grew up, the dreamer had understood the dreamer. And now, shut out from all fame himself—to be forbidden to hail even his daughter's fame!—and that daughter herself to be in the conspiracy against him! Sharper than the serpent's tooth was

the ingratitude, and sharper than the serpent's tooth was the wail of the pitying barbiton !

The eventful hour is come. Viola is gone to the theatre; her mother with her. The indignant musician remains at home. Gionetta bursts into the room : My Lord Cardinal's carriage is at the door—the Padrone is sent for. He must lay aside his violin ; he must put on his brocade coat and his lace ruffles. Here they are—quick, quick ! And quick rolls the gilded coach, and majestic sits the driver, and statelily prance the steeds. Poor Pisani is lost in a mist of uncomfortable amaze. He arrives at the theatre, he descends at the great door, he turns round and round, and looks about him and about—he misses something. Where is the violin? Alas ! his soul, his voice, his self of self, is left behind ! It is but an automaton that the lackeys conduct up the stairs, through the tier, into the Cardinal's box. But then, what bursts upon him ! Does he dream? The first act is over (they did not send for him till success seemed no longer doubtful), the first act has decided all. He feels *that*, by the electric sympathy which even the one heart has at once with a vast audience. He feels it by the breathless stillness of that multitude ; he feels it even by the lifted finger of the Cardinal. He sees his Viola on the stage, radiant in her robes and gems ; he hears her voice thrilling through the single heart of the thousands ! But the scene—the part—the music ! It is his other child—his immortal child—the spirit-infant of his soul—his darling of many years of patient obscurity and pining genius—his masterpiece—his opera of the Siren !

This, then, was the mystery that had so galled him—this the cause of the quarrel with the Cardinal—this the secret not to be proclaimed till the success was won, and the daughter had united her father's triumph with her own !

And there she stands, as all souls bow before her—fairer than the very Siren he had called from the deeps of melody. Oh, long and sweet recompense of toil ! Where is on earth the rapture like that which is known to genius when at last it bursts from its hidden cavern into light and fame !

He did not speak ; he did not move ; he stood transfixed, breathless, the tears rolling down his cheeks ; only from time to time his hands still wandered about—mechanically they sought for the faithful instrument—why was it not there to share his triumph?

At last the curtain fell ; but on such a storm—and diapason of applause ! Uprose the audience as one man ; as with one

voice that dear name was shouted. She came on—trembling, pale—and in the whole crowd saw but her father's face. The audience followed those moistened eyes; they recognized with a thrill the daughter's impulse and her meaning. The good old Cardinal drew him gently forward— Wild musician! thy daughter has given thee back more than the life thou gavest!

"My poor violin," said he, wiping his eyes; "they will never hiss thee again now!"

CHAPTER III.

"Fra si contrarie tempre in ghiaccio e in foco,
In riso e in pianto, e fra paura e spene
L' ingannatrice Donna—" *
—*Gerusal. Lib.*, cant. iv. xciv.

Now, notwithstanding the triumph both of the singer and the opera, there had been one moment in the first act, and consequently, *before* the arrival of Pisani, when the scale seemed more than doubtful. It was in a chorus replete with all the peculiarities of the composer. And when this Maelstrom of Capricci whirled and foamed, and tore ear and sense through every variety of sound, the audience simultaneously recognized the hand of Pisani. A title had been given to the opera which had hitherto prevented all suspicion of its parentage; and the overture and opening, in which the music had been regular and sweet, had led the audience to fancy they detected the genius of their favorite Paisiello. Long accustomed to ridicule and almost to despise the pretensions of Pisani as a composer, they now felt as if they had been unduly cheated into the applause with which they had hailed the overture and the commencing scenas. An ominous buzz circulated round the house; the singers, the orchestra—electrically sensitive to the impression of the audience—grew themselves agitated and dismayed, and failed in the energy and precision which could alone carry off the grotesqueness of the music.

There are always in every theatre many rivals to a new author, and a new performer: a party impotent while all goes well, but a dangerous ambush the instant some accident throws into confusion the march to success. A hiss arose; it was partial, it is true, but the significant silence of all applause seemed to forebode the coming moment when the displeasure

* Between such contrarious mixtures of ice and fire, laughter and tears, fear and hope, the deceiving dame—

would grow contagious. It was the breath that stirred the impending avalanche. At that critical moment, Viola, the Siren queen, emerged for the first time from her ocean cave. As she came forward to the lamps, the novelty of her situation, the chilling apathy of the audience, which even the sight of so singular a beauty did not at the first arouse, the whispers of the malignant singers on the stage, the glare of the lights, and more—far more than the rest—that recent hiss, which had reached her in her concealment, all froze up her faculties and suspended her voice. And instead of the grand invocation into which she ought rapidly to have burst, the regal Siren, retransformed into the trembling girl, stood pale and mute before the stern, cold array of those countless eyes.

At that instant, and when consciousness itself seemed about to fail her, as she turned a timid beseeching glance around the still multitude, she perceived, in a box near the stage, a countenance which at once, and like magic, produced on her mind an effect never to be analyzed nor forgotten. It was one that awakened an indistinct haunting reminiscence, as if she had seen it in those day-dreams she had been so wont from infancy to indulge. She could not withdraw her gaze from that face, and as she gazed, the awe and coldness that had before seized her vanished, like a mist from before the sun.

In the dark splendor of the eyes that met her own there was indeed so much of gentle encouragement, of benign and compassionate admiration ; so much that warmed, and animated, and nerved ; that any one—actor or orator—who has ever observed the effect that a single earnest and kindly look, in the crowd that is to be addressed and won, will produce upon his mind, may readily account for the sudden and inspiriting influence which the eye and smile of the stranger exercised on the debutante.

And while yet she gazed, and the glow returned to her heart, the stranger half rose, as if to recall the audience to a sense of the courtesy due to one so fair and young ; and the instant his voice gave the signal, the audience followed it by a burst of generous applause. For this stranger himself was a marked personage, and his recent arrival at Naples had divided with the new opera the gossip of the city. And then as the applause ceased, clear, full, and freed from every fetter, like a spirit from the clay, the Siren's voice poured forth its entrancing music. From that time, Viola forgot the crowd, the hazard, the whole world, except the fairy one over which she presided. It seemed that the stranger's presence only served still more to

heighten that delusion, in which the artist sees no creation without the circle of his art; she felt as if that serene brow and those brilliant eyes inspired her with powers never known before: and as if searching for a language to express the strange sensations occasioned by his presence, that presence itself whispered to her the melody and the song.

Only when all was over, and she saw her father and felt his joy, did this wild spell vanish before the sweeter one of the household and filial love. Yet again, as she turned from the stage, she looked back involuntarily, and the stranger's calm and half melancholy smile sunk into her heart, to live there, to be recalled with confused memories, half of pleasure and half of pain.

Pass over the congratulations of the good Cardinal-Virtuoso, astonished at finding himself and all Naples had been hitherto in the wrong on a subject of taste, still more astonished at finding himself and all Naples combining to confess it; pass over the whispered ecstacies of admiration which buzzed in the singer's ear, as once more, in her modest veil and quiet dress, she escaped from the crowd of gallants that choked up every avenue behind the scenes; pass over the sweet embrace of father and child, returning through the starlit streets and along the deserted Chiaja in the Cardinal's carriage; never pause now to note the tears and ejaculations of the good, simple-hearted mother . . . . see them returned; see the well-known room, *venimus ad larem nostrum;** see old Gionetta bustling at the supper; and hear Pisani, as he rouses the barbiton from its case, communicating all that has happened to the intelligent Familiar; hark to the mother's merry low English laugh: Why, Viola, strange child, sittest thou apart, thy face leaning on thy fair hands, thine eyes fixed on space? Up, rouse thee! Every dimple on the cheek of home must smile to-night. †

And a happy reunion it was round that humble table; a feast Lucullus might have envied in his hall of Apollo, in the dried grapes and the dainty sardines, and the luxurious polenta, and the old lácrima, a present from the good Cardinal. The barbiton, placed on a chair—a tall, high-backed chair—beside the musician, seemed to take a part in the festive meal. Its honest varnished face glowed in the light of the lamp; and there was an impish, sly demureness in its very silence, as its master, between every mouthful, turned to talk to it of something he had forgotten to relate before. The good wife looked on affection-

* We come to our own house.

† "Ridete est quidquid est Domi cachinnorum."—CATULL. ad Sirm. Penin.

ately, and could not eat for joy ; but suddenly she rose, and placed on the artist's temples a laurel wreath, which she had woven beforehand in fond anticipation ; and Viola, on the other side her brother, the barbiton, re-arranged the chaplet, and smoothing back her father's hair, whispered, " Caro Padre, you will not let *him* scold me again ! "

Then poor Pisani, rather distracted between the two, and excited both by the lácrima and his triumph, turned to the younger child with so naïve and grotesque a pride, " I don't know which to thank the most. You give me so much joy, child ; I am so proud of thee and myself. But he and I, poor fellow, have been so often unhappy together ! "

Viola's sleep was broken ; that was natural. The intoxication of vanity and triumph, the happiness in the happiness she had caused, all this was better than sleep. But still from all this, again and again her thoughts flew to those haunting eyes, to that smile with which forever the memory of the triumph, of the happiness, was to be united. Her feelings, like her own character, were strange and peculiar. They were not those of a girl whose heart, for the first time reached through the eye, sighs its natural and native language of first love. It was not so much admiration, though the face that reflected itself on every wave of her restless fancies was of the rarest order of majesty and beauty ; nor a pleased and enamoured recollection that the sight of this stranger had bequeathed ; it was a human sentiment of gratitude and delight, mixed with something more mysterious, of fear and awe. Certainly she had seen before those features ; but when and how? Only when her thoughts had sought to shape out her future, and when in spite of all the attempts to vision forth a fate of flowers and sunshine, a dark and chill foreboding made her recoil back into her deepest self. It was a something found that had long been sought for by a thousand restless yearnings and vague desires, less of the heart than mind ; not as when youth discovers the one to be beloved, but rather as when the student, long wandering after the clue to some truth in science, sees it glimmer dimly before him, to beckon, to recede, to allure, and to wane again. She fell at last into unquiet slumber, vexed by deformed, fleeting, shapeless phantoms ; and, waking, as the sun, through a veil of hazy cloud, glinted with a sickly ray across the casement, she heard her father settled back betimes to his one pursuit, and calling forth from his Familiar a low mournful strain, like a dirge over the dead.

" And why," she asked, when she descended to the room

below ; " why, my father, was your inspiration so sad, after the joy of last night ? "

" I know not, child. I meant to be merry, and compose an air in honor of thee, but he is an obstinate fellow, this—and he would have it so."

CHAPTER IV.

" E cosi i pigri e timidi desiri
Sprona." *—*Gerusal. Lib.*, cant. iv. lxxxviii.

It was the custom of Pisani, except when the duties of his profession made special demand on his time, to devote a certain portion of the mid-day to sleep ; a habit not so much a luxury as a necessity to a man who slept very little during the night. In fact, whether to compose or to practise, the hours of noon were precisely those in which Pisani could not have been active if he would. His genius resembled those fountains full at dawn and evening, overflowing at night, and perfectly dry at the meridian. During this time, consecrated by her husband to repose, the Signora generally stole out to make the purchases necessary for the little household, or to enjoy, as what woman does not, a little relaxation in gossip with some of her own sex. And the day following this brilliant triumph, how many congratulations would she have to receive !

At these times it was Viola's habit to seat herself without the door of the house, under an awning which sheltered from the sun, without obstructing the view ; and there now, with the prompt-book on her knee, on which her eye roves listlessly from time to time, you may behold her, the vine-leaves clustering, from their arching trellis over the door behind, and the lazy white-sailed boats skimming along the sea that stretched before.

As she thus sat, rather in revery than thought, a man coming from the direction of Posilipo, with a slow step and downcast eyes, passed close by the house, and Viola, looking up abruptly, started in a kind of terror as she recognized the stranger. She uttered an involuntary exclamation, and the cavalier turning, saw, and paused.

He stood a moment or two between her and the sunlit ocean, contemplating in a silence too serious and gentle for the boldness of gallantry, the blushing face and the young slight form before him ; at length he spoke.

* And thus the slow and timid passions urged.

"Are you happy, my child," he said, in almost a paternal tone, "at the career that lies before you? From sixteen to thirty, the music in the breath of applause is sweeter than all the music your voice can utter!"

"I know not," replied Viola falteringly, but encouraged by the liquid softness of the accents that addressed her; "I know not whether I am happy now, but I was last night. And I feel, too, Excellency, that I have you to thank, though, perhaps, you scarce know why!"

"You deceive yourself," said the cavalier, with a smile. "I am aware that I assisted to your merited success, and it is you who scarce know how. The *why* I will tell you: because I saw in your heart a nobler ambition that that of the woman's vanity; it was the daughter that interested me. Perhaps you would rather I should have admired the singer?"

"No; oh, no!"

"Well, I believe you. And now, since we have thus met, I will pause to counsel you. When next you go to the theatre you will have at your feet all the young gallants of Naples. Poor infant! the flame that dazzles the eye can scorch the wing. Remember that the only homage that does not sully, must be that which these gallants will not give thee. And whatever thy dreams of the future—and I see, while I speak to thee, how wandering they are, and wild—may only those be fulfilled which centre round the hearth of home."

He paused, as Viola's breast heaved beneath its robe. And with a burst of natural and innocent emotions, scarcely comprehending, though an Italian, the grave nature of his advice, she exclaimed:

"Ah, Excellency, you cannot know how dear to me that home is already. And my father—there would be no home, Signor, without him!"

A deep and melancholy shade settled over the face of the cavalier. He looked up at the quiet house buried amidst the vine-leaves, and turned again to the vivid, animated face of the young actress.

"It is well," said he. "A simple heart may be its own best guide, and so, go on, and prosper. Adieu, fair singer."

"Adieu, Excellency; but,"—and something she could not resist, an anxious, sickening feeling of fear and hope, impelled her to the question—"I shall see you again, shall I not, at San Carlo?"

"Not, at least, for some time. I leave Naples to-day."

"Indeed"; and Viola's heart sunk within her: the poetry of the stage was gone.

"And," said the cavalier, turning back, and gently laying his hand on hers; "And perhaps, before we meet, you may have suffered; known the first sharp griefs of human life; known how little what fame can gain repays what the heart can lose; but be brave and yield not—not even to what may seem the piety of sorrow. Observe yon tree in your neighbor's garden. Look how it grows up, crooked and distorted. Some wind scattered the germ, from which it sprung, in the clefts of the rock; choked up and walled round by crags and buildings, by nature and man, its life has been one struggle for the light—light which makes to that life the necessity and the principle: you see how it has writhed and twisted; how, meeting the barrier in one spot, it has labored and worked, stem and branches, towards the clear skies at last. What has preserved it through each disfavor of birth and circumstances; why are its leaves as green and fair as those of the vine behind you, which, with all its arms, can embrace the open sunshine? My child, because of the very instinct that impelled the struggle; because the labor for the light won to the light at length. So with a gallant heart, through every adverse accident of sorrow, and of fate, to turn to the sun, to strive for the heaven; this it is that gives knowledge to the strong, and happiness to the weak. Ere we meet again, you will turn sad and heavy eyes to those quiet boughs, and when you hear the birds sing from them, and see the sunshine come aslant from crag and housetop to be the playfellow of their leaves, learn the lesson that Nature teaches you, and strive through darkness to the light!"

As he spoke he moved on slowly, and left Viola wondering, silent, saddened with his dim prophecy of coming evil, and yet, through sadness, charmed. Involuntarily her eyes followed him; involuntarily she stretched forth her arms, as if by a gesture to call him back; she would have given worlds to have seen him turn; to have heard once more his low, calm, silvery voice; to have felt again the light touch of his hand on hers. As moonlight that softens into beauty every angle on which it falls, seemed his presence; as moonlight vanishes, and things assume their common aspect of the rugged and the mean, he receded from her eyes, and the outward scene was commonplace once more.

The stranger passed on, through that long and lovely road which reaches at last the palaces that face the public gardens, and conducts to the more populous quarters of the city.

A group of young, dissipated courtiers loitering by the gateway of a house which was open for the favorite pastime of the day—the resort of the wealthier and high-born gamesters—made way for him, as with a courteous inclination he passed them by.

"*Per fede*," said one, "is not that the rich Zanoni, of whom the town talks?"

"Ay; they say his wealth is incalculable!"

"*They* say. Who are *they?* What is the authority? He has not been many days at Naples, and I cannot yet find anyone who knows aught of his birthplace, his parentage, or, what is more important, his estates!"

"That is true; but he arrived in a goodly vessel, which, *they say*, is his own. See—no, you cannot see it here—but it rides yonder in the Bay. The bankers he deals with speak with awe of the sums placed in their hands."

"Whence came he?"

"From some seaport in the East. My valet learned from some of the sailors on the Mole that he had resided many years in the interior of India."

"Ah, I am told that in India men pick up gold like pebbles, and that there are valleys where the birds build their nests with emeralds to attract the moths. Here comes our prince of gamesters, Cetoxa; be sure that he already must have made acquaintance with so wealthy a cavalier; he has that attraction to gold which the magnet has to steel. Well, Cetoxa, what fresh news of the ducats of Signor Zanoni?"

"Oh," said Cetoxa carelessly, "my friend—"

"Ha! ha! hear him! His friend—"

"Yes; my friend Zanoni is going to Rome for a short time; when he returns he has promised me to fix a day to sup with me, and I will then introduce him to you, and to the best society of Naples. Diavolo! but he is a most agreeable and witty gentleman!"

"Pray tell us how you came so suddenly to be his friend?"

"My dear Belgioso, nothing more natural. He desired a box at San Carlo: but I need not tell you that the expectation of a new opera (Ah, how superb it is! That poor devil Pisani!—who would have thought it?) and a new singer (What a face—what a voice!—ah!) had engaged every corner of the house. I heard of Zanoni's desire to honor the talent of Naples, and, with my usual courtesy to distinguished strangers, I sent to place my box at his disposal. He accepts it; I wait

on him between the acts; he is most charming; he invites me to supper. Cospetto, what a retinue! We sit late; I tell him all the news of Naples; we grow bosom friends; he presses on me this diamond before we part; it is a trifle he tells me; the jewellers value it at 5000 pistoles! The merriest evening I have passed these ten years!"

The cavaliers crowded round to admire the diamond.

"Signor Count Cetoxa," said one grave-looking sombre man, who had crossed himself two or three times during the Neapolitan's narrative. "Are you not aware of the strange reports about this person; and are you not afraid to receive from him a gift which may carry with it the most fatal consequences? Do you not know that he is said to be a sorcerer; to possess the mal-occhio—to—"

"Prithee, spare us your antiquated superstitions," interrupted Cetoxa contemptuously. "They are out of fashion; nothing now goes down but scepticism and philosophy. And what, after all, do these rumors, when sifted, amount to? They have no origin but this: a silly old man of eighty-six, quite in his dotage, solemnly avers that he saw this same Zanoni seventy years ago (he himself, the narrator, then a mere boy) at Milan. When this very Zanoni, as you all see, is at least as young as you or I, Belgioso."

"But that," said the grave gentleman, "*that* is the mystery. Old Avelli declares that Zanoni does not seem a day older than when they met at Milan. He says that even then at Milan—mark this—where, though under another name, this Zanoni appeared in the same splendor, he was attended also by the same mystery. And that an old man *there* remembered to have seen him sixty years before, in Sweden."

"Tush," returned Cetoxa, "the same thing has been said of the quack Cagliostro—mere fables. I will believe them when I see this diamond turn to a wisp of hay. For the rest (he added gravely) I consider this illustrious gentleman my friend; and a whisper against his honor and repute will, in future, be equivalent to an affront to myself."

Cetoxa was a redoubted swordsman, and excelled in a peculiarly awkward manœuvre which he himself had added to the variations of the *stoccata*. The grave gentleman, however anxious for the spiritual weal of the Count, had an equal regard for his own corporeal safety. He contented himself with a look of compassion, and, turning through the gateway, ascended the stairs to the gaming-tables.

"Ha, ha!" said Cetoxa, laughing, "our good Loredano is

envious of my diamond. Gentlemen, you sup with me to-night. I assure you I never met a more delightful, sociable, entertaining person than my dear friend, the Signor Zanoni."

CHAPTER V.

"Quello Ippogifo, grande e strano augello
Lo porta via." *—*Orl. Fur.*, c. vi. xviii.

And now, accompanying this mysterious Zanoni, am I compelled to bid a short farewell to Naples. Mount behind me—mount on my hippogriff, reader—settle yourself at your ease. I bought the pillion the other day of a poet who loves his comfort; it has been newly stuffed for your special accommodation. So, so, we ascend! Look as we ride aloft—look! Never fear, hippogriffs never stumble; and every hippogriff in Italy is warranted to carry elderly gentlemen—look down on the gliding landscapes! There, near the ruins of the Oscan's old Atella, rises Aversa, once the stronghold of the Norman; there gleam the columns of Capua, above the Vulturnian Stream. Hail to ye, cornfields, and vineyards famous for the old Falernian! Hail to ye, golden orange groves of Mola di Gaeta! Hail to ye, sweet shrubs and wild flowers, *omnis copia narium*, that clothe the mountain skirts of the silent Lantulæ! Shall we rest at the Volscian Anxur—the modern Terracina—where the lofty rock stands like the giant that guards the last borders of the southern land of love? Away, away! and hold your breath as we flit above the Pontine Marshes. Dreary and desolate, their miasma is to the gardens we have passed what the rank commonplace of life is to the heart when it has left love behind. Mournful Campagna, thou openest on us in majestic sadness. Rome, seven-hilled Rome! receive us as Memory receives the wayworn; receive us in silence, amidst ruins! Where is the traveller we pursue? Turn the hippogriff loose to graze; he loves the acanthus that wreathes round yon broken columns. Yes, that is the Arch of Titus, the conqueror of Jerusalem; that the Colosseum! Through one passed the triumph of the deified invader; in one fell the butchered gladiators. Monuments of murder, how poor the thoughts, how mean the memories ye awaken, compared with those that speak to the heart of man on the heights of Phyle, or by thy lone mound, gray Marathon! We stand amidst weeds,

* That hippogriff, great and marvellous bird, bears him away.

and brambles, and long waving herbage. Where we stand reigned Nero; here were his tesselated floors; here

"Mighty in the Heaven, a second Heaven,"

hung the vault of his ivory roofs; here, arch upon arch, pillar on pillar, glittered to the world the golden palace of its master—the Golden House of Nero. How the lizard watches us with his bright timorous eye! We disturb his reign. Gather that wild flower: the Golden House is vanished, but the wild flower may have kin to those which the stranger's hand scattered over the tyrant's grave; see, over this soil, the grave of Rome, Nature strews the wild flowers still!

In the midst of this desolation is an old building of the Middle Ages. Here dwells a singular Recluse. In the season of the malaria, the native peasant flies the rank vegetation round; but he, a stranger and a foreigner, breathes in safety the pestilential air. He has no friends, no associates, no companions, except books and instruments of science. He is often seen wandering over the grass-grown hills, or sauntering through the streets of the new city, not with the absent brow and incurious air of students, but with observant, piercing eyes, that seem to dive into the hearts of the passers by. An old man, but not infirm; erect and stately, as if in his prime. None know whether he be rich or poor. He asks no charity, and he gives none; he does no evil, and seems to confer no good. He is a man who appears to have no world beyond himself; but appearances are deceitful; and Science, as well as Benevolence, lives in the Universe. This abode, for the first time since thus occupied, a visitor enters. It is Zanoni.

You observe those two men seated together, conversing earnestly. Years long and many have flown away since they met last—at least, bodily, and face to face. But if they are sages, thought can meet thought, and spirit spirit, though oceans divide the forms. Death itself divides not the wise. Thou meetest Plato when thine eyes moisten over the Phædo. May Homer live with all men forever!

They converse; they confess to each other; they conjure up the past, and repeople it; but note how differently do such remembrances affect the two. On Zanoni's face, despite its habitual calm, the emotions change and go. *He* has acted in the past he surveys; but not a trace of the humanity that participates in joy and sorrow can be detected on the passionless visage of his companion; the Past, to him, as is now the Present, has been but as nature to the sage, the volume to the student, a calm and spiritual life—a study, a contemplation.

From the Past they turn to the Future. Ah! at the close of the last century, the future seemed a thing tangible; it was woven up in all men's fears and hopes of the Present.

At the verge of that hundred years, Man, the ripest-born of Time,* stood as at the deathbed of the Old World, and beheld the New Orb, blood-red amidst cloud and vapor, uncertain if a comet or a sun. Behold the icy and profound disdain on the brow of the old man; the lofty yet touching sadness that darkens the glorious countenance of Zanoni. Is it that one views with contempt the struggle and its issue, and the other with awe or pity? Wisdom contemplating mankind leads but to the two results: compassion or disdain. He who believes in other worlds can accustom himself to look on this as the naturalist on the revolutions of an ant-hill, or of a leaf. What is the Earth to Infinity! What its duration to the Eternal! Oh, how much greater is the soul of one man than the vicissitudes of the whole globe! Child of heaven, and heir of immortality, how from some star hereafter wilt thou look back on the ant-hill and its commotions, from Clovis to Robespierre, from Noah to the Final Fire! The spirit that can contemplate, that lives only in the intellect, can ascend to its star, even from the midst of the burial-ground called Earth, and while the Sarcophagus called Life immures in its clay the Everlasting!

But thou, Zanoni,—thou hast refused to live *only* in the intellect; thou hast not mortified the heart; thy pulse still beats with the sweet music of mortal passion; thy kind is to thee still something warmer than an abstraction; thou wouldst look upon this Revolution in its cradle, which the storms rock; thou wouldst see the world while its elements yet struggle through the chaos!

Go!

CHAPTER VI.

"Précepteurs ignorans de ce faible univers."†

—VOLTAIRE.

"Nous étions à table chez un de nos confrères à l'Académie, Grand Seigneur et homme d'esprit.'"‡—LA HARPE.

ONE evening, at Paris, several months after the date of our last chapter, there was a reunion of some of the most eminent wits of the time, at the house of a personage distinguished

* "An des Jahrhunderts Neige,
Der reifste Sohn der Zeit."

—*Die Künstler.*

† Ignorant teachers of this weak world.

‡ We supped with one of our confrères of the Academy; a great nobleman and wit.

alike by noble birth and liberal accomplishments. Nearly all present were of the views that were then the mode. For as came afterwards a time when nothing was so unpopular as the people, so that was the time when nothing was so vulgar as aristocracy. The airiest fine gentleman and the haughtiest noble prated of equality, and lisped enlightenment.

Among the more remarkable guests were Condorcet, then in the prime of his reputation, the correspondent of the King of Prussia, the intimate of Voltaire, the member of half the academies of Europe—noble by birth, polished in manners, republican in opinions. There, too, was the venerable Malesherbes, "l'amour et les delices de la Nation." ‡ There Jean Silvain Bailly, the accomplished scholar; the aspiring politician. It was one of those *petits soupers* for which the capital of all social pleasures was so renowned. The conversation, as might be expected, was literary and intellectual, enlivened by graceful pleasantry. Many of the ladies of that ancient and proud noblesse—for the noblesse yet existed, though its hours were already numbered—added to the charm of the society; and theirs were the boldest criticisms, and often the most liberal sentiments.

Vain labor for me—vain labor almost for the grave English language, to do justice to the sparkling paradoxes that flew from lip to lip. The favorite theme was the superiority of the Moderns to the Ancients. Condorcet on this head was eloquent, and to some, at least, of his audience, most convincing. That Voltaire was greater than Homer few there were disposed to deny. Keen was the ridicule lavished on the dull pedantry which finds everything ancient necessarily sublime.

"Yet," said the graceful Marquis de ——, as the champagne danced to his glass, "more ridiculous still is the superstition that finds everything incomprehensible holy! But intelligence circulates, Condorcet; like water, it finds its level. My hairdresser said to me this morning, 'Though I am but a poor fellow, I believe as little as the finest gentleman.'"

"Unquestionably, the great Revolution draws near to its final completion—*à pas de géant*, as Montesquieu said of his own immortal work."

Then there rushed from all—wit and noble, courtier and republican—a confused chorus, harmonious only in its anticipation of the brilliant things to which "the great Revolution" was to give birth. Here Condorcet is more eloquent than before.

‡ The idol and delight of the nation (so called by his historian, Gaillard).

"Il faut absolument que la Superstition et le Fanatisme fassent place à la philosophie.* Kings persecute persons, priests opinion. Without kings, men must be safe; and without priests, minds must be free."

"Ah," murmured the Marquis, "and as *ce cher Diderot* has so well sung:

'Et des boyaux du dernier prêtre
Serrez le cou du dernier roi.'" †

"And then," resumed Cordorcet; "then commences the Age of Reason! Equality in instruction, equality in institutions, equality in wealth! The great impediments to knowledge are, first, the want of a common language; and next, the short duration of existence. But as to the first, when all men are brothers, why not an universal language? As to the second, the organic perfectibility of the vegetable world is undisputed, is Nature less powerful in the nobler existence of thinking man? The very destruction of the two most active causes of physical deterioration—here, luxurious wealth, there, abject penury—must necessarily prolong the general term of life.‡ The art of medicine will then be honored in the place of war, which is the art of murder; the noblest study of the acutest minds will be devoted to the discovery and arrest of the causes of disease. Life, I grant, cannot be made eternal; but it may be prolonged almost indefinitely. And as the meaner animal bequeaths its vigor to its offspring, so man shall transmit his improved organization, mental and physical, to his sons. Oh, yes, to such a consummation does our age approach!"

The venerable Malesherbes sighed. Perhaps he feared the consummation might not come in time for him. The handsome Marquis de —— and the ladies, yet handsomer than he, looked conviction and delight.

But two men there were, seated next to each other, who joined not in the general talk; the one, a stranger newly arrived in Paris, where his wealth, his person, and his accomplishments had already made him remarked and courted; the other, an old man, somewhere about seventy: the witty and virtuous, brave, and still light-hearted Cazotte, the author of *Le Diable Amoureux.*

These two conversed familiarly, and apart from the rest, and only by an occasional smile testified their attention to the general conversation.

* It must necessarily happen that superstition and fanaticism give place to philosophy.

† And throttle the neck of the last king. with a string from the bowels of the last priest.

‡ See Condorcet's posthumous work on the progress of the human mind.—EDITOR.

"Yes," said the stranger; "yes, we have met before."

"I thought I could not forget your countenance; yet I task in vain my recollections of the past."

"I will assist you. Recall the time when, led by curiosity, or perhaps the nobler desire of knowledge, you sought initiation into the mysterious order of Martines de Pasqualis." *

"Ah! Is it possible! You are one of that theurgic brotherhood?"

"Nay, I attended their ceremonies but to see how vainly they sought to revive the ancient marvels of the cabala."

"Such studies please you? I have shaken off the influence they once had on my own imagination."

"You have not shaken it off," returned the stranger gravely; "it is on you still—on you at this hour; it beats in your heart; it kindles in your reason; it will speak in your tongue!"

And then with a yet lower voice, the stranger continued to address him, to remind him of certain ceremonies and doctrines; to explain and enforce them by references to the actual experience and history of his listener, which Cazotte thrilled to find so familiar to a stranger.

Gradually the old man's pleasing and benevolent countenance grew overcast, and he turned, from time to time, searching, curious, uneasy glances towards his companion.

The charming Duchess de G——archly pointed out to the lively guests the abstracted air and clouded brow of the poet; and Condorcet, who liked no one else to be remarked when he himself was present, said to Cazotte: "Well, and what do *you* predict of the Revolution? How, at least, will it affect us?"

At that question, Cazotte started; his cheeks grew pale, large drops stood on his forehead; his lips writhed. His gay companions gazed on him in surprise.

"Speak!" whispered the stranger, laying his hand gently upon the arm of the old wit.

* It is so recorded of Cazotte. Of Martines de Pasqualis little is known; even the country to which he belonged is matter of conjecture. Equally so the rites, ceremonies, and nature of the cabalistic order he established. St. Martin was a disciple of the school, and that, at least, is in its favor; for in spite of his mysticism, no man more beneficent, generous, pure, and virtuous, than St. Martin, adorned the last century. Above all, no man more distinguished himself from the herd of sceptical philosophers by the gallantry and fervor with which he combated materialism, and vindicated the necessity of faith amidst a chaos of unbelief. It may also be observed that Cazotte, whatever else he learned of the brotherhood of Martines, learned nothing that diminished the excellence of his life and the sincerity of his religion. At once gentle and brave, he never ceased to oppose the excesses of the Revolution. To the last, unlike the Liberals of his time, he was a devout and sincere Christian. Before his execution, he demanded a pen and paper, to write these words: "Ma femme, mes enfans, ne me pleurez pas, ne m'oubliez pas, mais souvenez-vous surtout de ne jamais offenser Dieu."*

* My wife, my children, weep not for me; forget me not, but remember above everything never to offend God.

At that word, Cazotte's face grew locked and rigid, his eyes dwelt vacantly on space, and in a low, hollow voice, he thus answered : *

"You ask how it will affect yourselves,—you, its most learned and its least selfish agents. I will answer ; you, Marquis de Condorcet, will die in prison, but not by the hand of the executioner. In the peaceful happiness of that day, the philosopher will carry about with him, not the elixir, but the poison."

"My poor Cazotte," said Condorcet, with his gentle smile, "what have prisons, executioners, and poison to do with an age of liberty and brotherhood ?"

"It is in the names of Liberty and Brotherhood that the prisons will reek, and the headsman be glutted."

"You are thinking of priestcraft, not philosophy, Cazotte," said Champfort. † "And what of me ?"

"You will open your own veins to escape the fraternity of Cain. Be comforted ; the last drops will not follow the razor. For you, venerable Malesherbes ; for you, Aimar Nicolai ; for you, learned Bailly,—I see them dress the scaffold ! And all the while, O great philosophers, your murderers will have no word but philosophy on their lips ! "

The hush was complete and universal when the pupil of Voltaire—the prince of the academic sceptics, hot La Harpe—cried, with a sarcastic laugh ; " Do not flatter me, O prophet, by exemption from the fate of my companions. Shall *I* have no part to play in this drama of your phantasies ? "

At this question, Cazotte's countenance lost its unnatural expression of awe and sternness ; the sardonic humor most common to it came back and played in his brightening eyes.

"Yes, La Harpe, the most wonderful part of all ! *You* will become—a Christian ! "

This was too much for the audience that a moment before seemed grave and thoughtful, and they burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, while Cazotte, as if exhausted by his predictions, sunk back in his chair, and breathed hard and heavily.

"Nay," said Madame de G——, "you who have predicted

* The following prophecy (not unfamiliar perhaps, to some of my readers), with some slight variations, and at greater length, in the text of the authority I am about to cite, is to be found in La Harpe's posthumous Works. The MS. is said to exist still in La Harpe's handwriting, and the story is given on M. Petitot's authority, vol. i., p. 62. It is not for me to inquire if there be doubts of its foundation on fact.—Ed.

† Champfort, one of those men of letters who, though misled by the first fair show of the Revolution, refused to follow the baser men of action into its horrible excesses, lived to express the murderous philanthropy of its agents by the best *bon mot* of the time. Seeing written on the walls, 'Fraternité ou la Mort," he observed, that the sentiment should be translated thus—'*Sois mon frère, ou je te tue.*'*

* Be my brother or I kill thee.

such grave things concerning us, must prophesy something also about yourself."

A convulsive tremor shook the involuntary prophet; it passed, and left his countenance elevated by an expression of resignation and calm.

"Madame," said he, after a long pause, "during the siege of Jerusalem, we are told by its historian that a man, for seven successive days, went round the ramparts, exclaiming, 'Woe to thee, Jerusalem, woe to myself!'"

"Well, Cazotte, well?"

"And on the seventh day, while he thus spoke, a stone from the machines of the Romans dashed him into atoms!"

With these words Cazotte rose; and the guests, awed in spite of themselves, shortly afterwards broke up and retired.

CHAPTER VII.

Qui donc t'a donné la mission s'annoncer au peuple que la divinité n'existe pas—quel avantage trouves-tu à persuader à l'homme qu'une force aveugle préside à ses destinées et frappe au hasard le crime et la vertu?*—ROBESPIERRE, *Discours*, Mai 7, 1794.

IT was some time before midnight when the stranger returned home. His apartments were situated in one of those vast abodes which may be called an epitome of Paris itself. The cellars rented by mechanics, scarcely removed a step from paupers, often by outcasts and fugitives from the law,—often by some daring writer, who, after scattering amongst the people doctrines the most subversive of order, or the most libellous on the characters of priest, minister, and king, retired amongst the rats, to escape the persecution that attends the virtuous; the ground-floor occupied by shops, the *entresol* by artists; the principal stories by nobles, and the garrets by journeymen or grisettes.

As the stranger passed up the stairs, a young man of a form and countenance singularly unprepossessing emerged from a door in the *entresol*, and brushed beside him. His glance was furtive, sinister, savage, and yet timorous; the man's face was of ashen paleness, and the features worked convulsively. The stranger paused and observed him with thoughtful looks as he hurried down the stairs. While he thus stood, he heard a groan from the room which the young man had just quitted;

* Who then invested you with the mission to announce to the people that there is no God?—what advantage find you in persuading man that nothing but blind force presides over his destinies and strikes hap-hazard both crime and virtue?

the latter had pulled to the door with hasty vehemence, but some fragment, probably of fuel, had prevented its closing, and it now stood slightly ajar ; the stranger pushed it open and entered. He passed a small ante-room, meanly furnished, and stood in a bed-chamber of meagre and sordid discomfort. Stretched on the bed, and writhing in pain, lay an old man ; a single candle lit the room, and threw its feeble ray over the furrowed and death-like face of the sick person. No attendant was by ; he seemed left alone to breathe his last. "Water," he moaned feebly ; "water—I parch—I burn !" The intruder approached the bed, bent over him, and took his hand : "Oh, bless thee, Jean, bless thee !" said the sufferer. "Hast thou brought back the physician already? Sir, I am poor, but I can pay you well. I would not die yet, for that young man's sake." And he sat upright in his bed and fixed his dim eyes anxiously on his visitor.

"What are your symptoms, your disease?"

"Fire—fire—fire in the heart, the entrails—I burn !"

"How long is it since you have taken food?"

"Food ! Only this broth. There is the basin, all I have taken these six hours. I had scarce drunk it ere these pains began."

The stranger looked at the basin ; some portion of the contents was yet left there.

"Who administered this to you?"

"Who? Jean ! Who else should? I have no servant,—none ! I am poor, very poor, sir. But no ! you physicians do not care for the poor. *I am rich !* Can you cure me?"

"Yes, if Heaven permit. Wait but a few moments."

The old man was fast sinking under the rapid effects of poison. The stranger repaired to his own apartments, and returned in a few moments with some preparation that had the instant result of an antidote. The pain ceased, the blue and livid color receded from the lips ; the old man fell into a profound sleep. The stranger drew the curtains round the bed, took up the light, and inspected the apartment. The walls of both rooms were hung with drawings of masterly excellence. A portfolio was filled with sketches of equal skill ; but these last were mostly subjects that appalled the eye and revolted the taste ; they displayed the human figure in every variety of suffering ; the rack, the wheel, the gibbet, all that cruelty has invented to sharpen the pangs of death, seemed yet more dreadful from the passionate gusto and earnest force of the designer. And some of the countenances of those thus deline-

ated were sufficiently removed from the ideal to show that they were portraits; in a large, bold, irregular hand, was written beneath these drawings, "The Future of the Aristocrats." In a corner of the room, and close by an old bureau, was a small bundle, over which, as if to hide it, a cloak was thrown carelessly. Several shelves were filled with books; these were almost entirely the works of the philosophers of the time—the philosophers of the material school, especially the Encyclopédistes, whom Robespierre afterwards so singularly attacked, when the coward deemed it unsafe to leave his reign without a God.* A volume lay on a table, it was one of Voltaire, and the page was opened at his argumentative assertion of the existence of the Supreme Being.† The margin was covered with pencilled notes, in the stiff but tremulous hand of old age; all in attempt to refute or to ridicule the logic of the sage of Ferney; Voltaire did not go far enough for the annotator! The clock struck two, when the sound of steps was heard without. The stranger silently seated himself on the farther side of the bed, and its drapery screened him, as he sat, from the eyes of a man who now entered on tiptoe; it was the same person who had passed him on the stairs. The new-comer took up the candle and approached the bed. The old man's face was turned to the pillow; but he lay so still, and his breathing was so inaudible, that his sleep might well, by that hasty, shrinking, guilty glance, be mistaken for the repose of death. The new-comer drew back, and a grim smile passed over his face; he replaced the candle on the table, opened the bureau with a key which he took from his pocket, and loaded himself with several rouleaus of gold, that he found in the drawers. At this time the old man began to wake. He stirred, he looked up; he turned his eyes towards the light now waning in its socket; he saw the robber at his work; he sat erect for an instant, as if transfixed, more even by astonishment than terror. At last he sprang from his bed:

"Just Heaven! Do I dream! Thou—thou—thou for whom I toiled and starved! *Thou!*"

* Cette secte (les Encyclopédistes) propagea avec beaucoup de zèle l'opinion du materialisme, qui prevalut parmi les grands et parmi les beaux esprits; on lui doit en partie cette espêce de philosophie pratique qui, reduisant l'Egoisme en systême, regarde a société humaine comme un guerre de ruse, le succés comme la règle du juste et de l'injuste, la probité comme une affaire de goût, ou de bienséance, le monde comme le patrimonie des fripons adroits.*—Discours de Robespierre, May 7, 1794.

† Histoire de Jenni.

* This set (the Encyclopædists) propagate with much zeal the doctrine of materialism, which prevails among the great and the wits; we owe to it, partly, that kind of practical philosophy which, reducing Egotism to a system, looks upon society as a war of cunning, success the rule of right and wrong, honesty as an affair of taste or decency, and the world as the patrimony of clever scoundrels.

The robber started; the gold fell from his hand, and rolled on the floor.

"What!" he said. "Art thou not dead yet? Has the poison failed?"

"Poison, boy! Ah!" shrieked the old man, and covered his face with his hands; then, with sudden energy, he exclaimed, "Jean! Jean! Recall that word. Rob, plunder me if thou wilt, but do not say thou couldst murder one who only lived for thee! There, there, take the gold; I hoarded it but for thee. Go—go!" and the old man, who, in his passion, had quitted his bed, fell at the feet of the foiled assassin, and writhed on the ground—the mental agony more intolerable than that of the body, which he had so lately undergone. The robber looked at him with a hard disdain.

"What have I ever done to thee, wretch?" cried the old man. "What but loved and cherished thee? Thou wert an orphan, an outcast. I nurtured, nursed, adopted thee as my son. If men call me a miser, it was but that none might despise thee, my heir, because nature has stunted and deformed thee, when I was no more. Thou wouldst have had all when I was dead. Couldst thou not spare me a few months or days—nothing to thy youth, all that is left to my age? What have I done to thee?"

"Thou hast continued to live, and thou wouldst make no will."

"Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!"

"*Ton Dieu!* Thy God! Fool! Hast thou not told me, from my childhood, that there is *no* God? Hast thou not fed me on philosophy! Hast thou not said, 'Be virtuous, be good, be just, for the sake of mankind; but there is no life after this life?' Mankind! why should I love mankind? Hideous and misshapen, mankind jeer at me as I pass the streets. What hast thou done to me? Thou hast taken away from me, who am the scoff of this world, the hopes of another! Is there no other life? Well, then, I want thy gold, that at least I may hasten to make the best of this!"

"Monster! Curses light on thy ingratitude, thy—"

"And who hears thy curses? Thou knowest there is no God! Mark me; I have prepared all to fly. See—I have my passport; my horses wait without; relays are ordered. I have thy gold." (And the wretch, as he spoke, continued coldly to load his person with the rouleaus). "And now, if I spare thy life, how shall I be sure that thou wilt not inform against mine?" He advanced with a gloomy scowl and a menacing gesture as he spoke.

The old man's anger changed to fear. He cowered before the savage. "Let me live! Let me live!—that—that—"

"That—what?"

"I may pardon thee! Yes, thou hast nothing to fear from me. I swear it!"

"Swear! But by whom and what, old man? I cannot believe thee, if thou believest not in any God! Ha, ha! behold the result of thy lessons."

Another moment, and those murderous fingers would have strangled their prey. But between the assassin and his victim rose a form that seemed almost to both a visitor from the world that both denied—stately with majestic strength, glorious with awful beauty.

The ruffian recoiled, looked, trembled, and then turned and fled from the chamber. The old man fell again to the ground insensible.

CHAPTER VIII.

"To know how a bad man will act when in power, reverse all the doctrines he preaches when obscure."—S. MONTAGUE.

"Antipathies also form a part of magic (falsely) so-called. Man naturally has the same instinct as the animals; which warns them involuntarily against the creatures that are hostile or fatal to their existence. But *he* so often neglects it that it becomes dormant. Not so the true cultivator of the Great Science, etc."—TRISMEGISTUS THE FOURTH. (A Rosicrucian.)

WHEN he again saw the old man the next day, the stranger found him calm, and surprisingly recovered from the scene and sufferings of the night. He expressed his gratitude to his preserver with tearful fervor, and stated that he had already sent for a relation, who would make arrangements for his future safety and mode of life. "For I have money yet left," said the old man; "and henceforth have no motive to be a miser." He proceeded then briefly to relate the origin and circumstances of his connection with his intended murderer.

It seems that in earlier life he had quarrelled with his relations—from a difference in opinions of belief. Rejecting all religion as a fable, he yet cultivated feelings that inclined him—for though his intellect was weak, his dispositions were good—to that false and exaggerated sensibility which its dupes so often mistake for benevolence. He had no children; he resolved to adopt an *enfant du peuple*. He resolved to educate this boy according to "Reason." He selected an orphan of the lowest extraction, whose defects of person and constitution only yet the more moved his pity, and finally engrossed his affection.

In this outcast he not only loved a son, he loved a theory! He brought him up most philosophically. Helvetius had proved to him that education can do all; and before he was eight years old, the little Jean's favorite expressions were: "*La lumière et la vertu.*" * The boy showed talents, especially in art. The protector sought for a master who was as free from "superstition" as himself, and selected the painter, David. That person, as hideous as his pupil, and whose dispositions were as vicious as his professional abilities were undeniable, was certainly as free from "superstition" as the protector could desire. It was reserved for Robespierre hereafter to make the sanguinary painter believe in the *Être Suprême.* The boy was early sensible of his ugliness, which was almost preternatural. His benefactor found it in vain to reconcile him to the malice of nature by his philosophical aphorisms; but when he pointed out to him that in this world money, like charity, covers a multitude of defects, the boy listened eagerly and was consoled. To save money for his *protégé*—for the only thing in the world he loved—this became the patron's passion. Verily, he had met with his reward.

"But I am thankful he has escaped," said the old man, wiping his eyes. "Had he left me a beggar, I could never have accused him."

"No, for you are the author of his crimes."

"How! I, who never ceased to inculcate the beauty of virtue? Explain yourself."

"Alas, if thy pupil did not make this clear to thee last night from his own lips, an angel might come from heaven to preach to thee in vain."

The old man moved uneasily, and was about to reply, when the relative he had sent for, and who, a native of Nancy, happened to be at Paris at the time, entered the room. He was a man somewhat past thirty, and of a dry, saturnine, meagre countenance, restless eyes, and compressed lips. He listened, with many ejaculations of horror, to his relation's recital, and sought earnestly, but in vain, to induce him to give information against his *protégé.*

"Tush, tush, Réné Dumas!" said the old man, "you are a lawyer. You are bred to regard human life with contempt. Let any man break a law, and you shout, 'Execute him'!"

"I!" cried Dumas, lifting up his hands and eyes: "Venerable sage, how you misjudge me. I lament more than any one the severity of our code. I think the State never should

* Light and virtue.

take away life—no, not even the life of a murderer. I agree with that young statesman, Maximilian Robespierre, that the executioner is the invention of the tyrant. My very attachment to our advancing revolution is that it must sweep away this legal butchery."

The lawyer paused, out of breath. The stranger regarded him fixedly, and turned pale.

"You change countenance, sir," said Dumas; "you do not agree with me."

"Pardon me, I was at that moment repressing a vague fear which seemed prophetic—"

"And that—"

"Was that we should meet again, when your opinions on Death and the philosophy of revolutions might be different."

"Never!"

"You enchant me, Cousin Réné," said the old man, who had listened to his relation with delight. "Ah, I see you have proper sentiments of justice and philanthropy. Why did I not seek to know you before! You admire the Revolution? You, equally with me, detest the barbarity of kings and the fraud of priests?"

"Detest! How could I love mankind if I did not?"

"And," said the old man hesitatingly, "you do not think, with this noble gentleman, that I erred in the precepts I instilled into that wretched man?"

"Erred! Was Socrates to blame if Alcibiades was an adulterer and a traitor?"

"You hear him—you hear him! But Socrates had also a Plato; henceforth you shall be a Plato to me. You hear him?" exclaimed the old man, turning to the stranger.

But the latter was at the threshold. Who shall argue with the most stubborn of all bigotries, the fanaticism of unbelief?

"Are you going?" exclaimed Dumas. "And before I have thanked you, blessed you, for the life of this dear and venerable man? Oh, if ever I can repay you; if ever you want the heart's blood of Réné Dumas!" Thus volubly delivering himself, he followed the stranger to the threshold of the second chamber, and there gently detaining him, and after looking over his shoulder, to be sure that he was not heard by the owner, he whispered: "I ought to return to Nancy. One would not lose one's time; you don't think, sir, that that scoundrel took away *all* the old fool's money?"

"Was it thus Plato spoke of Socrates, Monsieur Dumas?"

"Ha, ha! you are caustic. Well, you have a right. Sir, we shall meet again."

"AGAIN!" muttered the stranger, and his brow darkened. He hastened to his chamber, he passed the day and the night alone, and in studies, no matter of what nature—they served to increase his gloom.

What could ever connect his fate with Réné Dumas? Or the fugitive assassin? Why did the buoyant air of Paris seem to him heavy with the steams of blood? why did an instinct urge him to fly from those sparkling circles, from that focus of the world's awakened hopes, warning him from return? he, whose lofty existence defied—but away these dreams and omens! He leaves France behind. Back, O Italy, to thy majestic wrecks! On the Alps his soul breathes the free air once more. Free air! Alas, let the world-healers exhaust their chemistry. Man never shall be as free in the market-place as on the mountain. But we, reader, we too, escape from these scenes of false wisdom clothing godless crime. Away, once more

"In den heitern Regionen
Wo die reinen Formen wohnen."

Away, to the loftier realm where the pure dwellers are. Unpolluted by the Actual, the Ideal lives only with Art and Beauty. Sweet Viola, by the shores of the blue Parthenope, by Virgil's tomb, and the Cimmerian cavern, we return to thee once more.

CHAPTER IX.

"Che non vuol che 'l destrier più vada in alto:
Poi lo lega nel margine marino
A un verde mirto in mezzo un lauro *e un pino*."*
—*Orl. Fur.*, c. vi. xxiii.

O MUSICIAN! art thou happy now? Thou art reinstalled at thy stately desk; thy faithful barbiton has its share in the triumph. It is thy masterpiece which fills thy ear; it is thy daughter who fills the scene; the music, the actress so united, that applause to one is applause to both. They make way for thee at the orchestra; they no longer jeer and wink, when, with a fierce fondness, thou dost caress thy Familiar, that plains, and wails, and chides, and growls, under thy remorseless hand. They understand now how irregular is ever the symmetry of real genius. The inequalities in its surface make

* As he did not wish that his charger (the hippogriff) should take any further excursons into the higher regions for the present, he bound him at the seashore to a green myrtle between a laurel and a pine.

the moon luminous to man. Giovanni Paisiello, Mâestro di Capella, if thy gentle soul could know envy, thou must sicken to see thy Elfrida and thy Pirro laid aside, and all Naples turned fantastic to the Siren, at whose measures shook querulously thy gentle head! But thou Paisiello, calm in the long prosperity of fame, knowest that the New will have its day, and comfortest thyself that the Elfrida and the Pirro will live forever. Perhaps a mistake, but it is by such mistakes that true genius conquers envy. "To be immortal," says Schiller, "live in the whole." To be superior to the hour, live in thy self-esteem. The audience now would give their ears for those variations and flights they were once wont to hiss. No! Pisani has been two-thirds of a life at silent work on his masterpiece: there is nothing he can add to *that*, however he might have sought to improve on the masterpieces of others. Is not this common? The least little critic, in reviewing some work of art, will say, "Pity this, and pity that"; "This should have been altered, that omitted." Yea, with his wiry fiddle-string will he creak out his accursed variations. But let him sit down and compose, himself. He sees no improvement in variations *then!* Every man can control his fiddle when it is his own work with which its vagaries would play the devil.

And Viola is the idol, the theme of Naples. She is the spoiled Sultana of the boards. To spoil her acting may be easy enough—shall they spoil her nature? No, I think not. There, at home, she is still good and simple; and there, under the awning by the doorway—there she still sits, divinely musing. How often, crook-trunked tree, she looks to thy green boughs; how often, like thee, in her dreams and fancies, does she struggle for the light! Not the light of the stage-lamps. Pooh, child! be contented with the lamps, even with the rush-lights. A farthing candle is more convenient for household purposes than the stars.

Weeks passed, and the stranger did not reappear: months had passed, and his prophecy of sorrow was not yet fulfilled. One evening Pisani was taken ill. His success had brought on the long-neglected composer pressing applications for concerti and sonata, adapted to his more peculiar science on the violin. He had been employed for some weeks, day and night, on a piece in which he hoped to excel himself. He took, as usual, one of those seemingly impracticable subjects which it was his pride to subject to the expressive powers of his art—the terrible legend connected with the transformation of Philomel. The pantomime of sound opened with the gay merriment of a feast.

The monarch of Thrace is at his banquet: a sudden discord brays through the joyous notes—the string seems to screech with horror. The king learns the murder of his son by the hands of the avenging sisters. Swift rage the chords, through the passions of fear, of horror, of fury, and dismay. The father pursues the sisters. Hark! what changes the dread, the discord, into that long, silvery, mournful music? The transformation is completed; and Philomel, now the nightingale, pours from the myrtle-bough the full, liquid, subduing notes that are to tell evermore to the world the history of her woes and wrongs. Now, it was in the midst of this complicated and difficult attempt that the health of the over-tasked musician, excited alike by past triumph and new ambition, suddenly gave way. He was taken ill at night. The next morning the doctor pronounced that his disease was a malignant and infectious fever. His wife and Viola shared in their tender watch; but soon that task was left to the last alone. The Signora Pisani caught the infection, and in a few hours was even in a state more alarming than that of her husband. The Neapolitans, in common with the inhabitants of all warm climates, are apt to become selfish and brutal in their dread of infectious disorders. Gionetta herself pretended to be ill, to avoid the sick chamber. The whole labor of love and sorrow fell on Viola. It was a terrible trial; I am willing to hurry over the details. The wife died first!

One day, a little before sunset, Pisani woke partially recovered from the delirium which had preyed upon him, with few intervals, since the second day of the disease; and casting about him his dizzy and feeble eyes, he recognized Viola, and smiled. He faltered her name as he rose and stretched his arms. She fell upon his breast, and strove to suppress her tears.

"Thy mother?" he said. "Does she sleep?"

"She sleeps—ah, yes!" and the tears gushed forth.

"I thought—eh! I know not *what* I have thought. But do not weep; I shall be well now—quite well. She will come to me when she wakes, will she?"

Viola could not speak; but she busied herself in pouring forth an anodyne, which she had been directed to give the sufferer as soon as the delirium should cease. The doctor had told her, too, to send for him the instant so important a change should occur.

She went to the door, and called to the woman who, during Gionetta's pretended illness, had been induced to supply her place; but the hireling answered not. She flew through the

chambers to search for her in vain ; the hireling had caught Gionetta's fears, and vanished. What was to be done? The case was urgent ; the doctor had declared not a moment should be lost in obtaining his attendance ; she must leave her father—she must go herself ! She crept back into the room ; the anodyne seemed already to have taken benign effect ; the patient's eyes were closed, and he breathed regularly, as in sleep. She stole away, threw her veil over her face, and hurried from the house.

Now, the anodyne had not produced the effect which it appeared to have done ; instead of healthful sleep, it had brought on a kind of light-headed somnolence, in which the mind, preternaturally restless, wandered about its accustomed haunts, waking up its old familiar instincts and inclinations. It was not sleep ; it was not delirium ; it was the dream wakefulness which opium sometimes induces, when every nerve grows tremulously alive, and creates a corresponding activity in the frame, to which it gives a false and hectic vigor. Pisani missed something—what, he scarcely knew ; it was a combination of the two wants most essential to his mental life : the voice of his wife, the touch of his Familiar. He rose—he left his bed—he leisurely put on his old dressing-robe, in which he had been wont to compose. He smiled complacently as the associations connected with the garment came over his memory ; he walked tremulously across the room, and entered the small cabinet next to his chamber, in which his wife had been accustomed more often to watch than sleep, when illness separated her from his side. The room was desolate and void. He looked round wistfully, and muttered to himself, and then proceeded regularly, and with a noiseless step, through the chambers of the silent house, one by one.

He came at last to that in which old Gionetta, faithful to her own safety, if nothing else, nursed herself, in the remotest corner of the house, from the danger of infection. As he glided in—wan, emaciated, with an uneasy, anxious, searching look in his haggard eyes—the old woman shrieked aloud and fell at his feet. He bent over her, passed his thin hands along her averted face, shook his head, and said in a hollow voice :

"I cannot find them ; where are they ?"

"Who, dear master ? Oh, have compassion on yourself ; they are not here. Blessed saints ! this is terrible : he has touched me. I am dead !"

"Dead ! Who is dead ? Is any one dead ?"

"Ah ! don't talk so ; you must know it well ; my poor mis-

tress—she caught the fever from you ; it is infectious enough to kill a whole city. San Gennaro, protect me ! My poor mistress—she is dead—buried, too ; and I, your faithful Gionetta, woe is me ! Go, go—to—to bed again, dearest master—go ! "

The poor musician stood for one moment mute and unmoving, then a slight shiver ran through his frame ; he turned and glided back, silent and spectre-like as he had entered. He came into the room where he had been accustomed to compose, where his wife, in her sweet patience, had so often sat by his side, and praised and flattered when the world had but jeered and scorned. In one corner he found the laurel wreath she had placed on his brows that happy night of fame and triumph ; and near it, half hid by her mantilla, lay in its case the neglected instrument.

Viola was not long gone ; she had found the physician ; she returned with him ; and as they gained the threshold, they heard a strain of music from within, a strain of piercing, heart-rending anguish : it was not like some senseless instrument, mechanical in its obedience to a human hand—it was as some spirit calling in wail and agony from the forlorn shades, to the angels it beheld afar beyond the Eternal Gulf. They exchanged glances of dismay. They hurried into the house ; they hastened into the room. Pisani turned, and his look, full of ghastly intelligence and stern command, awed them back. The black mantilla, the faded laurel-leaf, lay there before him. Viola's heart guessed all at a single glance ; she sprung to his knees—she clasped them : " Father, father, *I* am left thee still."

The wail ceased, the note changed ; with a confused association—half of the man, half of the artist—the anguish, still a melody, was connected with sweeter sounds and thoughts. The nightingale had escaped the pursuit : soft, airy, bird-like, thrilled the delicious notes a moment, and then died away. The instrument fell to the floor, and its chords snapped. You heard that sound through the silence. The artist looked on his kneeling child and then on the broken chords. . . . " Bury me by her side," he said, in a very calm, low voice ; " and *that*, by mine." And with these words his whole frame became rigid, as if turned to stone. The last change passed over his face. He fell to the ground, sudden and heavy. The chords *there*, too—the chords of the human instrument were snapped asunder. As he fell, his robe brushed the laurel-wreath, and that fell also, near, but not in reach of, the dead man's nerveless hand.

Broken instrument—broken heart—withered laurel-wreath! The setting sun through the vine-clad lattice streamed on all! So smiles the eternal Nature on the wrecks of all that make life glorious! And not a sun that sets not somewhere on the silenced music—on the faded laurel!

CHAPTER X.

"Chè difesa miglior ch' usbergo e scudo
E la santa innocenza al petto ignudo!" *
—*Ger. Lib.*, c. viii. xli.

And they buried the Musician and his barbiton together, in the same coffin. That famous Steiner—Primæval Titan of the great Tyrolese race—often hast thou sought to scale the heavens, and therefore must thou, like the meaner children of men, descend to the dismal Hades! Harder fate for thee than thy mortal master. For *thy* soul sleeps with thee in the coffin. And the music that belongs to *his*, separate from the instrument, ascends on high, to be heard often by a daughter's pious ears, when the heaven is serene and the earth sad. For there is a sense of hearing that the vulgar know not. And the voices of the dead breathe soft and frequent to those who can unite the memory with the faith.

And now Viola is alone in the world. Alone in the home where loneliness had seemed from the cradle a thing that was not of nature. And at first the solitude and the stillness were insupportable. Have you, ye mourners, to whom these sibyl leaves, weird with many a dark enigma, shall be borne, have you not felt that when the death of some best-loved one has made the hearth desolate—have you not felt as if the gloom of the altered home was too heavy for thought to bear? You would leave it, though a palace, even for a cabin. And yet, sad to say, when you obey the impulse, when you fly from the walls, when in the strange place in which you seek your refuge nothing speaks to you of the lost, have ye not felt again a yearning for that very food to memory which was just before but bitterness and gall? Is it not almost impious and profane to abandon that dear hearth to strangers? And the desertion of the home where your parents dwelt, and blessed you, upbraids your conscience as if you had sold their tombs. Beautiful was the Etruscan superstition, that the ancestors become the household gods. Deaf is the heart to which the Lares call from the

* Better defence than shield or breast-plate, is holy innocence to the naked breast!

desolate floors in vain. At first Viola had, in her intolerable anguish, gratefully welcomed the refuge which the house and family of a kindly neighbor, much attached to her father, and who was one of the orchestra that Pisani shall perplex no more, had proffered to the orphan. But the company of the unfamiliar in our grief, the consolation of the stranger, how it irritates the wound! And then, to hear elsewhere the name of father, mother, child—as if death came alone to you—to see elsewhere the calm regularity of those lives united in love and order, keeping account of happy hours, the unbroken timepiece of home, as if nowhere else the wheels were arrested, the chain shattered, the hands motionless, the chime still! No, the grave itself does not remind us of our loss like the company of those who have no loss to mourn. Go back to thy solitude, young orphan; go back to thy home; the sorrow that meets thee on the threshold can greet thee, even in its sadness, like the smile upon the face of the dead. And there, from thy casement, and there, from without thy door, thou seest still the tree, solitary as thyself, and springing from the clefts of the rock, but forcing its way to light,—as, through all sorrow, while the seasons yet can renew the verdure and bloom of youth, strives the instinct of the human heart! Only when the sap is dried up, only when age comes on, does the sun shine in vain for man and for the tree.

Weeks and months—months sad and many—again passed, and Naples will not longer suffer its idol to seclude itself from homage. The world ever plucks us back from ourselves with a thousand arms. And again Viola's voice is heard upon the stage, which, mystically faithful to life, is in nought more faithful than this, that it is the appearances that fill the scene; and we pause not to ask of what realities they are the proxies. When the actor of Athens moved all hearts as he clasped the burial urn, and burst into broken sobs, how few, there, knew that it held the ashes of his son! Gold, as well as fame, was showered upon the young actress; but she still kept to her simple mode of life, to her lowly home, to the one servant, whose faults, selfish as they were, Viola was too inexperienced to perceive. And it was Gionetta who had placed her, when first born, in her father's arms! She was surrounded by every snare, wooed by every solicitation that could beset her unguarded beauty and her dangerous calling. But her modest virtue passed unsullied through them all. It is true that she had been taught by lips now mute the maiden duties enjoined by honor and religion. And all love that spoke not of the altar

only shocked and repelled her. But besides that, as grief and solitude ripened her heart, and made her tremble at times to think how deeply it could feel, her vague and early visions shaped themselves into an ideal of love. And till the ideal is found, how the shadow that it throws before it chills us to the actual! With that ideal, ever and ever, unconsciously, and with a certain awe and shrinking, came the shape and voice of the warning stranger. Nearly two years had passed since he had appeared at Naples. Nothing had been heard of him, save that his vessel had been directed, some months after his departure, to sail for Leghorn. By the gossips of Naples, his existence, supposed so extraordinary, was well-nigh forgotten; but the heart of Viola was more faithful. Often he glided through her dreams, and when the wind sighed through that fantastic tree, associated with his remembrance, she started, with a tremor and a blush, as if she had heard him speak.

But amongst the train of her suitors was one to whom she listened more gently than to the rest; partly because, perhaps, he spoke in her mother's native tongue, partly because, in his diffidence, there was little to alarm and displease; partly because his rank, nearer to her own than that of lordlier wooers, prevented his admiration from appearing insult; partly because he himself, eloquent and a dreamer, often uttered thoughts that were kindred to those buried deepest in her mind. She began to like, perhaps to love him, but as a sister loves; a sort of privileged familiarity sprung up between them. If in the Englishman's breast arose wild and unworthy hopes, he had not yet expressed them. Is there danger to thee here, lone Viola? Or is the danger greater in thy unfound ideal?

And now, as the overture to some strange and wizard spectacle, closes this opening prelude. Wilt thou hear more? Come with thy faith prepared. I ask not the blinded eyes, but the awakened sense. As the enchanted Isle, remote from the homes of men,

> "Ove alcun legno
> Rado, o non mai va dalle nostre sponde,—" *
> (*Ger. Lib.*, cant. xiv. 69.)

is the space in the weary ocean of actual life to which the Muse or Sibyl (ancient in years but ever young in aspect), offers thee no unhallowed sail—

> "Quinci ella in cima a una montagne ascende
> Disabitata e d' ombre oscura e bruna;
> E par incanto a lei nevose rende

* Where ship seldom or never comes from our coasts.

Le spalle e i fianchi ; e sensa neve alcuna
Gli lascia il capo verdeggiante e vago ;
E vi fonda un palagio appresso un lago." *

BOOK II.—ART, LOVE, AND WONDER.

"Diversi aspetti in un confusi e misti." †—*Ger. Lib.*, cant. iv.

CHAPTER I.

"Centuari, e Sfingi, e pallide Gorgoni." ‡—*Ger. Lib.* c. iv. v.

One moonlit night, in the Gardens at Naples, some four or five gentlemen were seated under a tree, drinking their sherbet and listening, in the intervals of conversation, to the music which enlivened that gay and favorite resort of an indolent population. One of this little party was a young Englishman, who had been the life of the whole group, but who, for the last few moments, had sunk into a gloomy and abstracted revery. One of his countrymen observed this sudden gloom, and, tapping him on the back, said : "What ails you, Glyndon? Are you ill? You have grown quite pale—you tremble. Is it a sudden chill? You had better go home : these Italian nights are often dangerous to our English constitutions."

"No, I am well now ; it was a passing shudder. I cannot account for it myself."

A man, apparently of about thirty years of age, and of a mien and countenance strikingly superior to those around him, turned abruptly, and looked steadfastly at Glyndon.

"I think I understand what you mean," said he ; "and perhaps," he added, with a grave smile, "I could explain it better than yourself." Here, turning to the others, he added : "You must often have felt, gentlemen, each and all of you, especially when sitting alone at night, a strange and unaccountable sensation of coldness and awe creeps over you ; your blood curdles, and the heart stands still ; the limbs shiver, the hair

* There, she a mountain's lofty peak ascends,
Unpeopled, shady, shagg'd with forests brown,
Whose sides by power of magic half way down
She heaps with slippery ice, and frost, and snow,
But sunshiny and verdant leaves the crown
With orange woods and myrtles,—speaks, and lo!
Rich from the bordering lake a palace rises slow.
—Wiffin's Translation.

† Different appearances, confused and mixt in one.

‡ Centaurs, and Sphinxes, and pallid Gorgons.

bristles ; you are afraid to look up, to turn your eyes to the darker corners of the room ; you have a horrible fancy that something unearthly is at hand ; presently the whole spell, if I may so call it, passes away, and you are ready to laugh at your own weakness. Have you not often felt what I have thus imperfectly described ? If so, you can understand what our young friend has just experienced, even amidst the delights of this magical scene, and amidst the balmy whispers of a July night."

"Sir," replied Glyndon, evidently much surprised, "you have defined exactly the nature of that shudder which came over me. But how could my manner be so faithful an index to my impressions ?"

"I know the signs of the visitation," returned the stranger gravely, "they are not to be mistaken by one of my experience."

All the gentlemen present then declared that they could comprehend, and had felt, what the stranger had described.

"According to one of our national superstitions," said Mervale, the Englishman who had first addressed Glyndon, "the moment you so feel your blood creep and your hair stand on end, some one is walking over the spot which shall be your grave."

"There are in all lands different superstitions to account for so common an occurrence," replied the stranger. "One sect among the Arabians holds that at that instant God is deciding the hour either of your death, or of some one dear to you. The African savage, whose imagination is darkened by the hideous rites of his gloomy idolatry, believes that the Evil Spirit is pulling you towards him by the hair : so do the Grotesque and the Terrible mingle with each other."

"It is evidently a mere physical accident : a derangement of the stomach, a chill of the blood," said a young Neapolitan, with whom Glyndon had formed a slight acquaintance.

"Then why is it always coupled in all nations with some superstitious presentiment or terror—some connection between the material frame and the supposed world without us? For my part, I think—"

"Ay, what do you think, sir ?" asked Glyndon curiously.

"I think," continued the stranger, "that it is the repugnance and horror with which our more human elements recoil from something, indeed, invisible, but antipathetic to our own nature ; and from a knowledge of which we are happily secured by the imperfection of our senses."

"You are a believer in spirits, then?" said Mervale, with an incredulous smile.

"Nay, it was not precisely of spirits that I spoke; but there may be forms of matter as invisible and impalpable to us as the animalculæ in the air we breathe—in the water that plays in yonder basin. Such beings may have passions and powers like our own—as the animalculæ to which I have compared them. The monster that lives and dies in a drop of water—carnivorous, insatiable, subsisting on the creatures minuter than himself—is not less deadly in his wrath, less ferocious in his nature, than the tiger of the desert. There may be things around us that would be dangerous and hostile to men, if Providence had not placed a wall between them and us, merely by different modifications of matter."

"And think you that wall never can be removed?" asked young Glyndon abruptly. "Are the traditions of sorcerer and wizard, universal and immemorial as they are, merely fables?"

"Perhaps yes; perhaps no," answered the stranger indifferently. "But who, in an age in which the reason has chosen its proper bounds, would be mad enough to break the partition that divides him from the boa and the lion—to repine at and rebel against the law which confines the shark to the great deep? Enough of these idle speculations."

Here the stranger rose, summoned the attendant, paid for his sherbet, and, bowing slightly to the company, soon disappeared among the trees.

"Who is that gentleman?" asked Glyndon eagerly.

The rest looked at each other, without replying, for some moments.

"I never saw him before," said Mervale, at last.

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"I know him well," said the Neapolitan, who was, indeed, the Count Cetoxa. "If you remember, it was as my companion that he joined you. He visited Naples about two years ago, and has recently returned; he is very rich, indeed enormously so. A most agreeable person. I am sorry to hear him talk so strangely to-night; it serves to encourage the various foolish reports that are circulated concerning him."

"And surely," said another Neapolitan, "the circumstance that occurred but the other day, so well known to yourself, Cetoxa, justifies the reports you pretend to deprecate."

"Myself and my countryman," said Glyndon, "mix so little in Neapolitan society, that we lose much that appears well

worthy of lively interest. May I inquire what are the reports, and what is the circumstance you refer to?"

"As to the reports, gentlemen," said Cetoxa, courteously addressing himself to the two Englishmen, "it may suffice to observe, that they attribute to the Signor Zanoni certain qualities which everybody desires for himself, but damns any one else for possessing. The incident Signor Belgioso alludes to illustrates these qualities, and is, I must own, somewhat startling. You probably play, gentlemen?" (Here Cetoxa paused; and, as both Englishmen had occasionally staked a few scudi at the public gaming tables, they bowed assent to the conjecture.) Cetoxa continued: "Well, then, not many days since, and on the very day that Zanoni returned to Naples, it so happened that I had been playing pretty high, and had lost considerably. I rose from the table, resolved no longer to tempt fortune, when I suddenly perceived Zanoni, whose acquaintance I had before made (and who, I may say, was under some slight obligation to me), standing by, a spectator. Ere I could express my gratification at this unexpected recognition, he laid his hand on my arm. 'You have lost much,' said he; 'more than you can afford. For my part, I dislike play; yet I wish to have some interest in what is going on. Will you play this sum for me? The risk is mine, the half profits yours.' I was startled, as you may suppose, at such an address; but Zanoni had an air and tone with him it was impossible to resist; besides, I was burning to recover my losses, and should not have risen had I had any money left about me. I told him I would accept his offer, provided we shared the risk as well as profits. 'As you will,' said he smiling; 'we need have no scruple, for you will be sure to win.' I sate down; Zanoni stood behind me; my luck rose; I invariably won. In fact, I rose from the table a rich man."

"There can be no foul play at the public tables, especially when foul play would make against the bank?" This question was put by Glyndon.

"Certainly not," replied the Count. "But our good fortune was, indeed, marvellous; so extraordinary, that a Sicilian (the Sicilians are all ill-bred, bad-tempered fellows) grew angry and insolent. 'Sir,' said he, turning to my new friend, 'you have no business to stand so near to the table. I do not understand this; you have not acted fairly.' Zanoni replied, with great composure, that he had done nothing against the rules; that he was very sorry that one man could not win without another man losing; and that he could not act unfairly, even if dis-

posed to do so. The Sicilian took the stranger's mildness for apprehension, and blustered more loudly. In fact, he rose from the table, and confronted Zanoni in a manner that, to say the least of it, was provoking to any gentleman who has some quickness of temper, or some skill with the small sword."

"And," interrupted Belgioso, "the most singular part of the whole to me was, that this Zanoni, who stood opposite to where I sat, and whose face I distinctly saw, made no remark, showed no resentment. He fixed his eye steadfastly on the Sicilian; never shall I forget that look! It is impossible to describe it, it froze the blood in my veins. The Sicilian staggered back, as if struck. I saw him tremble; he sank on the bench. And then—"

"Yes, then," said Cetoxa, "to my infinite surprise, our gentleman, thus disarmed by a look from Zanoni, turned his whole anger upon me—*the*—but perhaps you do not know, gentlemen, that I have some repute with my weapon?"

"The best swordsman in Italy," said Belgioso.

"Before I could guess why or wherefore," resumed Cetoxa, "I found myself in the garden behind the house, with Ughelli (that was the Sicilian's name) facing me, and five or six gentlemen, the witnesses of the duel about to take place, around. Zanoni beckoned me aside. 'This man will fall,' said he. 'When he is on the ground, go to him, and ask whether he will be buried by the side of his father in the church of San Gennaro? 'Do you then know his family?' I asked with great surprise. Zanoni made me no answer, and the next moment I was engaged with the Sicilian. To do him justice, his *imbrogliato* was magnificent, and a swifter lunger never crossed a sword; nevertheless," added Cetoxa, with a pleasing modesty, "he was run through the body. I went up to him; he could scarcely speak. 'Have you any request to make—any affairs to settle?' He shook his head. 'Where would you wish to be interred?' He pointed towards the Sicilian coast. 'What!' said I, in surprise, '*not* by the side of your father, in the church of San Gennaro?' As I spoke, his face altered terribly, he uttered a piercing shriek, the blood gushed from his mouth, and he fell dead. The most strange part of the story is to come. We buried him in the church of San Gennaro. In doing so, we took up his father's coffin; the lid came off in moving it, and the skeleton was visible. In the hollow of the skull we found a very slender wire of sharp steel: this caused surprise and inquiry. The father, who was rich, and a miser, had died suddenly, and been buried in haste, owing, it was said, to the heat of the weather. Suspicion once

awakened, the examination became minute. The old man's servant was questioned, and at last confessed that the son had murdered the sire: the contrivance was ingenious; the wire was so slender, that it pierced the brain, and drew but one drop of blood, which the gray hairs concealed. The accomplice will be executed."

"And Zanoni—Did he give evidence? Did he account for—"

"No," interrupted the Count: "he declared that he had by accident visited the church that morning; that he had observed the tombstone of the Count Ughelli; that his guide had told him the Count's son was in Naples—a spendthrift and a gambler. While we were at play, he had heard the Count mentioned by name at the table; and when the challenge was given and accepted, it had occurred to him to name the place of burial, by an instinct which he either could not or would not account for."

"A very lame story," said Mervale.

"Yes! but we Italians are superstitious; the alleged instinct was regarded by many as the whisper of Providence. The next day the stranger became an object of universal interest and curiosity. His wealth, his manner of living, his extraordinary personal beauty, have assisted also to make him the rage; besides, I have had pleasure in introducing so eminent a person to our gayest cavaliers and our fairest ladies."

"A most interesting narrative," said Mervale, rising. "Come, Glyndon; shall we seek our hotel? It is almost daylight. Adieu, Signor!"

"What think you of this story?" said Glyndon, as the young men walked homeward."

"Why, it is very clear that this Zanoni is some impostor—some clever rogue; and the Neapolitan shares the booty, and puffs him off with all the hackneyed charlatanism of the Marvellous. An unknown adventurer gets into society by being made an object of awe and curiosity; he is more than ordinarily handsome; and the women are quite content to receive him without any other recommendation than his own face and Cetoxa's fables."

"I cannot agree with you. Cetoxa, though a gambler and a rake, is a nobleman of birth and high repute for courage and honor. Besides, this stranger, with his noble presence, and lofty air, so calm, so unobtrusive, has nothing in common with the forward garrulity of an impostor."

"My dear Glyndon, pardon me; but you have not yet acquired any knowledge of the world! The stranger makes the best of a fine person, and his *grand air* is but a trick of the

trade. But, to change the subject—how advances the love affair?"

"Oh, Viola could not see me to-day."

"You must not marry her. What would they all say at home?"

"Let us enjoy the present," said Glyndon, with vivacity; "we are young, rich, good-looking; let us not think of to-morrow."

"Bravo, Glyndon! Here we are at the hotel. Sleep sound, and don't dream of Signor Zanoni."

CHAPTER II.

"Prende, giovine audace e impaziente,
L'occasione offerta avidamente." *
—*Ger. Lib.*, c. vi. xxix.

Clarence Glyndon was a young man of fortune, not large, but easy and independent. His parents were dead, and his nearest relation was an only sister, left in England under the care of her aunt, and many years younger than himself. Early in life he had evinced considerable promise in the art of painting, and rather from enthusiasm than any pecuniary necessity for a profession, he determined to devote himself to a career in which the English artist generally commences with rapture and historical composition, to conclude with avaricious calculation, and portraits of Alderman Simpkins. Glyndon was supposed by his friends to possess no inconsiderable genius; but it was of a rash and presumptuous order. He was averse from continuous and steady labor, and his ambition rather sought to gather the fruit than to plant the tree. In common with many artists in their youth, he was fond of pleasure and excitement, yielding with little forethought to whatever impressed his fancy or appealed to his passions. He had travelled through the more celebrated cities of Europe, with the avowed purpose and sincere resolution of studying the divine masterpieces of his art. But in each, pleasure had too often allured him from ambition, and living beauty distracted his worship from the senseless canvas. Brave, adventurous, vain, restless, inquisitive, he was ever involved in wild projects and pleasant dangers—the creature of impulse and the slave of imagination.

It was then the period, when a feverish spirit of change was working its way to that hideous mockery of human aspirations, the Revolution of France. And from the chaos into which were already jarring the sanctities of the World's Venerable

* Take, youth, bold and impatient, the offered occasion eagerly.

Belief, arose many shapeless and unformed chimeras. Need I remind the reader, that while that was the day for polished scepticism and affected wisdom, it was the day also for the most egregious credulity and the most mystical superstition ; the day in which magnetism and magic found converts amongst the disciples of Diderot ; when prophecies were current in every mouth ; when the salon of a philosophical deist was converted into an Heraclea, in which necromancy professed to conjure up the shadows of the dead ; when the Crosier and the Book were ridiculed, and Mesmer and Cagliostro were believed. In that Heliacal Rising heralding the new sun before which all vapors were to vanish, stalked from their graves in the feudal ages all the phantoms that had flitted before the eyes of Paracelsus and Agrippa. Dazzled by the dawn of the Revolution, Glyndon was yet more attracted by its strange accompaniments, and natural it was with him, as with others, that the fancy which ran riot amidst the hopes of a social Utopia, should grasp with avidity all that promised, out of the dusty tracks of the beaten science, the bold discoveries of some marvellous Elysium.

In his travels, he had listened with vivid interest, at least, if not with implicit belief, to the wonders told of each more renowned Ghostseer, and his mind was therefore prepared for the impression which the mysterious Zanoni at first sight had produced upon it.

There might be another cause for this disposition to credulity. A remote ancestor of Glyndon's, on the mother's side, had achieved no inconsiderable reputation as a philosopher and alchemist. Strange stories were afloat concerning this wise progenitor. He was said to have lived to an age far exceeding the allotted boundaries of mortal existence, and to have preserved to the last the appearance of middle life. He had died at length it was supposed of grief for the sudden death of a great-grandchild, the only creature he had ever appeared to love. The works of this philosopher, though rare, were extant, and found in the library of Glyndon's home. Their Platonic mysticism ; their bold assertions, the high promises that might be detected through their figurative and typical phraseology, had early made a deep impression on the young imagination of Clarence Glyndon. His parents, not alive to the consequences of encouraging fancies which the very enlightenment of the age appeared to them sufficient to prevent or dispel, were fond, in the long winter nights, of conversing on the traditional history of this distinguished progenitor. And Clarence

thrilled with a fearful pleasure when his mother playfully detected a striking likeness between the features of the young heir and the faded portrait of the alchemist that overhung their mantel-piece, and was the boast of their household and the admiration of their friends. The child is, indeed, more often than we think for, "the father of the man."

I have said that Glyndon was fond of pleasure. Facile, as genius ever must be, to cheerful impression, his careless Artist-life, ere Artist-life settles down to labor, had wandered from flower to flower. He had enjoyed, almost to the reaction of satiety, the gay revelries of Naples, when he fell in love with the face and voice of Viola Pisani. But his love, like his ambition, was vague and desultory. It did not satisfy his whole heart and fill up his whole nature; not from want of strong and noble passions, but because his mind was not yet matured and settled enough for their development. As there is one season for the blossom, another for the fruit; so it is not till the bloom of fancy begins to fade that the heart ripens to the passions that the bloom precedes and foretells. Joyous alike at his lonely easel or amidst his boon companions, he had not yet known enough of sorrow to love deeply. For man must be disappointed with the lesser things of life before he can comprehend the full value of the greatest. It is the shallow sensualists of France, who, in their *salon*-language, call love "a folly." Love, better understood, is wisdom. Besides, the world was too much with Clarence Glyndon. His ambition of art was associated with the applause and estimation of that miserable minority of the Surface that we call the Public.

Like those who deceive, he was ever fearful of being himself the dupe. He distrusted the sweet innocence of Viola. He could not venture the hazard of seriously proposing marriage to an Italian actress; but the modest dignity of the girl, and something good and generous in his own nature, had hitherto made him shrink from any more worldly but less honorable designs. Thus the familiarity between them seemed rather that of kindness and regard, than passion. He attended the theatre; he stole behind the scenes to converse with her; he filled his portfolio with countless sketches of a beauty that charmed him as an artist, as well as lover. And day after day he floated on through a changing sea of doubt and irresolution, of affection and distrust. The last, indeed, constantly sustained against his better reason, by the sober admonitions of Mervale, a matter-of-fact man!

The day following that eve on which this section of my story

opens, Glyndon was riding alone by the shores of the Neapolitan sea, on the other side of the Cavern of Posilipo. It was past noon; the sun had lost its early fervor, and a cool breeze sprung up voluptuously from the sparkling sea. Bending over a fragment of stone near the roadside, he perceived the form of a man; and when he approached, he recognized Zanoni.

The Englishman saluted him courteously. "Have you discovered some antique?" said he, with a smile. "They are common as pebbles on this road."

"No," replied Zanoni; "it was but one of those antiques that have their date, indeed, from the beginning of the world, but which Nature eternally withers and renews." So saying, he showed Glyndon a small herb, with a pale blue flower, and then placed it carefully in his bosom.

"You are a herbalist?"

"I am."

"It is, I am told, a study full of interest."

"To those who understand it, doubtless."

"Is the knowledge, then, so rare?"

"Rare! The deeper knowledge is perhaps rather, among the arts, *lost* to the modern philosophy of commonplace and surface! Do you imagine there was no foundatiom for those traditions which come dimly down from remoter ages—as shells now found on the mountain-tops inform us where the seas have been? What was the old Colchian magic, but the minute study of Nature in her lowliest works? What the fable of Medea, but a proof of the powers that may be extracted from the germ and leaf? The most gifted of all the Priestcrafts, the mysterious sisterhoods of Cuth, concerning whose incantations Learning vainly bewilders itself amidst the maze of legends, sought in the meanest herbs what, perhaps, the Babylonian Sages explored in vain amidst the loftiest stars. Tradition yet tells you that there existed a race* who could slay their enemies from afar, without weapon, without movement. The herb that ye tread on may have deadlier powers than your engineers can give to their mightiest instruments of war. Can you guess, that to these Italian shores—to theold Circæan Promontory—came the Wise from the farthest East to search for plants and simples which your Pharmacists of the Counter would fling from them as weeds? The first Herbalists—the master chemists of the world—were the tribe that the ancient reverence called by the name of *Titans*.† I remember once, by the Hebrus, in the

* Plut. *Symp.*, l. 5, c. 7.

† Syncellus, p. 14—"Chemistry the Invention of the Giants."

reign of— But this talk," said Zanoni, checking himself abruptly, and with a cold smile, "serves only to waste your time and my own." He paused, looked steadily at Glyndon, and continued: "Young man, think you that vague curiosity will supply the place of earnest labor? I read your heart. You wish to know me, and not this humble herb: but pass on; your desire cannot be satisfied."

"You have not the politeness of your countrymen," said Glyndon, somewhat discomposed. "Suppose I were desirous to cultivate your acquaintance, why should you reject my advances?"

"I reject no man's advances," answered Zanoni; "I must know them if they so desire; but *me*, in return, they can never comprehend. If you ask my acquaintance, it is yours; but I would warn you to shun me."

"And why are you, then, so dangerous?"

"On this earth, men are often, without their own agency, fated to be dangerous to others. If I were to predict your fortune by the vain calculations of the astrologer, I should tell you, in their despicable jargon, that my planet sat darkly in your house of life. Cross me not, if you can avoid it. I warn you now for the first time and last."

"You despise the astrologers, yet you utter a jargon as mysterious as theirs. I neither gamble nor quarrel; why, then, should I fear you?"

"As you will; I have done."

"Let me speak frankly; your conversation last night interested and perplexed me."

"I know it: minds like yours are attracted by mystery."

Glyndon was piqued at these words, though in the tone in which they were spoken there was no contempt.

"I see you do not consider me worthy of your friendship. Be it so. Good-day!" Zanoni coldly replied to the salutation; and as the Englishman rode on, returned to his botanical employment.

The same night Glyndon went, as usual, to the theatre. He was standing behind the scenes watching Viola, who was on the stage in one of her most brilliant parts. The house resounded with applause. Glyndon was transported with a young man's passion and a young man's pride: "This glorious creature," thought he, "may yet be mine."

He felt, while thus wrapt in delicious revery, a slight touch upon his shoulder: he turned, and beheld Zanoni. "You are in danger," said the latter. "Do not walk home to-night; or if you do, go not alone."

Before Glyndon recovered from his surprise, Zanoni disappeared; and when the Englishman saw him again, he was in the box of one of the Neapolitan nobles, where Glyndon could not follow him.

Viola now left the stage, and Glyndon accosted her with an unaccustomed warmth of gallantry. But Viola, contrary to her gentle habit, turned with an evident impatience from the address of her lover. Taking aside Gionetta, who was her constant attendant at the theatre, she said, in an earnest whisper:

"Oh, Gionetta! He is here again!—the stranger of whom I spoke to thee! And again, he alone, of the whole theatre, withholds from me his applause."

"Which is he, my darling?" said the old woman, with fondness in her voice. "He must indeed be dull—not worth a thought."

The actress drew Gionetta nearer to the stage, and pointed out to her a man in one of the boxes, conspicuous amongst all else by the simplicity of his dress, and the extraordinary beauty of his features.

"Not worth a thought, Gionetta!" repeated Viola—"not worth a thought! Alas, not to think of him seems the absence of thought itself!"

The prompter summoned the Signora Pisani. "Find out his name, Gionetta," said she, moving slowly to the stage, and passing by Glyndon, who gazed at her with a look of sorrowful reproach.

The scene on which the actress now entered was that of the final catastrophe, wherein all her remarkable powers of voice and art were pre-eminently called forth. The house hung on every word with breathless worship; but the eyes of Viola sought only those of one calm and unmoved spectator: she exerted herself as if inspired. Zanoni listened, and observed her with an attentive gaze, but no approval escaped his lips; no emotion changed the expression of his cold and half disdainful aspect. Viola, who was in the character of one who loved, but without return, never felt so acutely the part she played. Her tears were truthful; her passion that of nature: it was almost too terrible to behold. She was borne from the stage exhausted and insensible, amidst such a tempest of admiring rapture as Continental audiences alone can raise. The crowd stood up—handkerchiefs waved—garlands and flowers were thrown on the stage—men wiped their eyes, and women sobbed aloud.

"By heavens!" said a Neapolitan of great rank, "she has

fired me beyond endurance. To-night, this very night, she shall be mine! You have arranged all, Mascari?"

"All, Signor. And the young Englishman?"

"The presuming barbarian! As I before told thee, let him bleed for his folly. I will have no rival."

"But an Englishman! There is always a search after the bodies of the English."

"Fool! Is not the sea deep enough, or the earth secret enough, to hide one dead man? Our ruffians are silent as the grave itself: and I! Who would dare to suspect, to arraign the Prince di——? See to it—this night. I trust him to you—robbers murder him—you understand; the country swarms with them; plunder and strip him, the better to favor such report. Take three men; the rest shall be my escort."

Mascari shrugged his shoulders, and bowed submissively.

The streets of Naples were not then so safe as now, and carriages were both less expensive and more necessary. The vehicle which was regularly engaged by the young actress was not to be found. Gionetta, too aware of the beauty of her mistress and the number of her admirers to contemplate without alarm the idea of their return on foot, communicated her distress to Glyndon, and he besought Viola, who recovered but slowly, to accept his own carriage. Perhaps before that night she would not have rejected so slight a service. Now, for some reason or other, she refused. Glyndon, offended, was retiring sullenly, when Gionetta stopped him. "Stay, Signor," said she coaxingly; "the dear Signora is not well; do not be angry with her; I will make her accept your offer."

Glyndon stayed, and after a few moments spent in expostulation on the part of Gionetta, and resistance on that of Viola, the offer was accepted. Gionetta and her charge entered the carriage, and Glyndon was left at the door of the theatre to return home on foot. The mysterious warning of Zanoni then suddenly occurred to him; he had forgotten it in the interest of his lover's quarrel with Viola. He thought it now advisable to guard against danger foretold by lips so mysterious: he looked round for some one he knew; the theatre was disgorging its crowds; they hustled, and pressed upon him; but he recognized no familiar countenance. While pausing irresolute, he heard Mervale's voice calling on him, and, to his great relief, discovered his friend making his way through the throng.

"I have secured you," said he, "a place in the Count Cetoxa's carriage. Come along, he is waiting for us."

"How kind in you! How did you find me out?"

"I met Zanoni in the passage. 'Your friend is at the door of the theatre,' said he; 'do not let him go home on foot to-night; the streets of Naples are not always safe.' I immediately remembered that some of the Calabrian bravos had been busy within the city the last few weeks, and suddenly meeting Cetoxa—but here he is."

Further explanation was forbidden, for they now joined the Count. As Glyndon entered the carriage and drew up the glass, he saw four men standing apart by the pavement, who seemed to eye him with attention.

"Cospetto!" cried one, "that is the Englishman!" Glyndon imperfectly heard the exclamation as the carriage drove on. He reached home in safety.

The familiar and endearing intimacy which always exists in Italy between the nurse and the child she has reared, and which the "Romeo and Juliet" of Shakespeare in no way exaggerates, could not but be drawn yet closer than usual, in a situation so friendless as that of the orphan actress. In all that concerned the weakness of the heart, Gionetta had large experience; and when, three nights before, Viola, on returning from the theatre, had wept bitterly, the nurse had succeeded in extracting from her a confession that she had seen one—not seen for two weary and eventful years—but never forgotten, and who, alas, had not evinced the slightest recognition of herself. Gionetta could not comprehend all the vague and innocent emotions that swelled this sorrow; but she resolved them all, with her plain, blunt understanding, to the one sentiment of love. And here, she was well fitted to sympathize and console. Confidant to Viola's entire and deep heart she never could be, for that heart never could have words for all its secrets. But such confidence as she could obtain she was ready to repay by the most unreproving pity and the most ready service.

"Have you discovered who he is?" asked Viola, as she was now alone in the carriage with Gionetta.

"Yes; he is the celebrated Signor Zanoni, about whom all the great ladies have gone mad. They say he is so rich! Oh, so much richer than any of the Inglesi! Not but what the Signor Glyndon—"

"Cease!" interrupted the young actress. "Zanoni! Speak of the Englishman no more."

The carriage was now entering that more lonely and remote part of the city in which Viola's house was situated, when it suddenly stopped.

Gionetta in alarm, thrust her head out of the window, and perceived by the pale light of the moon, that the driver, torn from his seat, was already pinioned in the arms of two men: the next moment, the door was opened violently, and a tall figure, masked and mantled, appeared.

"Fear not, fairest Pisani," said he gently, "no ill shall befall you." As he spoke, he wound his arms round the form of the fair actress, and endeavored to lift her from the carriage. But Gionetta was no ordinary ally; she thrust back the assailant with a force that astonished him, and followed the shock by a volley of the most energetic reprobation.

The mask drew back, and composed his disordered mantle.

"By the body of Bacchus!" said he, half laughing, "she is well protected. Here, Luigi—Giovanni! seize the hag! Quick! Why loiter ye?"

The mask retired from the door, and another and yet taller form presented itself. "Be calm, Viola Pisani," said he, in a low voice; "with me you are indeed safe!" He lifted his mask as he spoke, and showed the noble features of Zanoni.

"Be calm, be hushed; I can save you." He vanished, leaving Viola lost in surprise, agitation, and delight. There were, in all, nine masks: two were engaged with the driver; one stood at the head of the carriage horses; a fourth guarded the well-trained steeds of the party; three others (besides Zanoni and the one who had first accosted Viola), stood apart by a carriage drawn to the side of the road. To these three Zanoni motioned: they advanced; he pointed towards the first mask, who was in fact the Prince di ——, and to his unspeakable astonishment, the Prince was suddenly seized from behind.

"Treason!" he cried. "Treason among my own men! What means this?"

"Place him in his carriage. If he resist, his blood be on his own head!" said Zanoni calmly.

He approached the men who had detained the coachman.

"You are outnumbered and outwitted," said he: "join your lord; you are three men—we six, armed to the teeth. Thank our mercy that we spare your lives. Go!"

The men gave way, dismayed. The driver remounted.

"Cut the traces of their carriage and the bridles of their horses," said Zanoni, as he entered the vehicle containing Viola, which now drove on rapidly, leaving the discomfited ravisher in a state of rage and stupor impossible to describe.

"Allow me to explain this mystery to you," said Zanoni. "I discovered the plot against you—no matter how; I frus-

trated it thus: The head of this design is a nobleman, who has long persecuted you in vain. He and two of his creatures watched you from the entrance of the theatre, having directed six others to await him on the spot where you were attacked; myself and five of my servants supplied their place, and were mistaken for his own followers. I had previously ridden alone to the spot where the men were waiting, and informed them that their master would not require their services that night. They believed me, and accordingly dispersed. I then joined my own band, whom I had left in the rear; you know all. We are at your door."

CHAPTER III.

"When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And darkly bright, are bright in dark directed."

—SHAKSPEARE.

ZANONI followed the young Neapolitan into her house: Gionetta vanished—they were left alone.

Alone, in that room so often filled, in the old happy days, with the wild melodies of Pisani; and now, as she saw this mysterious, haunting, yet beautiful and stately stranger, standing on the very spot where she had sat at her father's feet, thrilled and spellbound, she almost thought, in her fantastic way of personifying her own airy notions, that that spiritual Music had taken shape and life, and stood before her glorious in the image it assumed. She was unconscious all the while of her own loveliness. She had thrown aside her hood and veil; her hair, somewhat disordered, fell over the ivory neck which the dress partially displayed; and, as her dark eyes swam with grateful tears, and her cheek flushed with its late excitement, the god of light and music himself never, amidst his Arcadian valleys, wooed, in his mortal guise, maiden or nymph more fair.

Zanoni gazed at her with a look in which admiration seemed not unmingled with compassion. He muttered a few words to himself, and then addressed her aloud.

"Viola, I have saved you from a great peril; not from dishonor only, but, perhaps, from death. The Prince di ——, under a weak despot and a venal administration, is a man above the law. He is capable of every crime; but amongst his passions he has such prudence as belongs to ambition; if

you were not to reconcile yourself to your shame, you would never enter the world again to tell your tale. The ravisher has no heart for repentance, but he has a hand that can murder. I have saved you, Viola. Perhaps you would ask me wherefore?" Zanoni paused, and smiled mournfully, as he added: "You will not wrong me by the thought that he who has preserved is not less selfish than he who would have injured. Orphan, I do not speak to you in the language of your wooers; enough that I know pity, and am not ungrateful for affection. Why blush, why tremble at the word? I read your heart while I speak, and I see not one thought that should give you shame. I say not that you love me yet; happily, the fancy may be roused long before the heart is touched. But it has been my fate to fascinate your eye, to influence your imagination. It is to warn you against what could bring you but sorrow, as I warned you once to prepare for sorrow itself, that I am now your guest. The Englishman, Glyndon, loves thee well: better, perhaps, than I can ever love: if not worthy of thee yet, he has but to know thee more to deserve thee better. He may wed thee, he may bear thee to his own free and happy land, the land of thy mother's kin. Forget me; teach thyself to return and deserve his love; and I tell thee that thou wilt be honored and be happy."

Viola listened with silent, inexpressible emotion, and burning blushes, to this strange address, and when he had concluded, she covered her face with her hands and wept. And yet, much as his words were calculated to humble or irritate, to produce indignation or excite shame, those were not the feelings with which her eyes streamed and her heart swelled. The woman at that moment was lost in the child; and *as* a child with all its exacting, craving, yet innocent desire to be loved, weeps in unrebuking sadness when its affection is thrown austerely back upon itself, so, without anger, and without shame, wept Viola.

Zanoni contemplated her thus, as her graceful head, shadowed by its redundant tresses, bent before him; and after a moment's pause he drew near to her, and said, in a voice of the most soothing sweetness, and with a half-smile upon his lip:

"Do you remember, when I told you to struggle for the light, that I pointed for example to the resolute and earnest tree: I did not tell you, fair child, to take example by the moth, that would soar to the star, but falls scorched beside the lamp. Come, I will talk to thee. This Englishman—"

Viola drew herself away, and wept yet more passionately.

"This Englishman is of thine own years, not far above thine own rank. Thou mayst share his thoughts in life; thou mayst sleep beside him in the same grave in death! And I, but *that* view of the future should concern us not. Look into thy heart, and thou wilt see that till again my shadow crossed thy path, there had grown up for this thine equal, a pure and calm affection that would have ripened into love. Hast thou never pictured to thyself a home in which thy partner was thy young wooer?"

"Never!" said Viola, with sudden energy, "never, but to feel that such was not the fate ordained me. And, oh!" she continued, rising suddenly, and putting aside the tresses that veiled her face, she fixed her eyes upon the questioner; "And, oh! whoever thou art that thus wouldst read my soul and shape my future, do not mistake the sentiment that—that (she faltered an instant, and went on with downcast eyes), that has fascinated my thoughts to thee. Do not think that I could nourish a love unsought and unreturned. It is not love that I feel for thee, stranger. Why should I? Thou hast never spoken to me but to admonish—and now, to wound!" Again she paused, again her voice faltered; the tears trembled on her eyelids; she brushed them away and resumed. "No, not love, if that be love which I have heard and read of, and sought to simulate on the stage,—but a more solemn, fearful, and, it seems to me, almost preternatural attraction, which makes me associate thee, waking or dreaming, with images that at once charm and awe. Thinkest thou, if it were love, that I could speak to thee thus? That (she raised her looks suddenly to his) mine eyes could thus search and confront thine own? Stranger, I ask but at times to see, to hear thee! stranger, talk not to me of others. Forewarn, rebuke, bruise my heart, reject the not unworthy gratitude it offers thee, if thou wilt, but come not always to me as an omen of grief and trouble. Sometimes have I seen thee in my dreams surrounded by shapes of glory and light; thy looks radiant with a celestial joy which they wear not now. Stranger, thou hast saved me, and I thank and bless thee! Is that also a homage thou wouldst reject?" With these words she crossed her arms meekly on her bosom, and inclined lowlily before him. Nor did her humility seem unwomanly or abject, nor that of mistress to lover, of slave to master, but rather of a child to its guardian, of a neophyte of the old religion to her priest. Zanoni's brow was melancholy and thoughtful. He looked at her with a strange expression of kindness, of sorrow, yet of

tender affection, in his eyes; but his lips were stern, and his voice cold, as he replied:

"Do you know what you ask, Viola? Do you guess the danger to yourself—perhaps to both of us—which you court? Do you know that my life, separated from the turbulent herd of men, is one worship of the Beautiful, from which I seek to banish what the Beautiful inspires in most? As a calamity, I shun what to man seems the fairest fate—the love of the daughters of earth. At present, I can warn and save thee from many evils; if I saw more of thee, would the power still be mine? You understand me not. What I am about to add, it will be easier to comprehend. I bid thee banish from thy heart all thought of me, but as one whom the Future cries aloud to thee to avoid. Glyndon, if thou acceptest his homage, will love thee till the tomb closes upon both. I too (he added, with emotion)—"I, too, might love thee!"

"You!" cried Viola, with the vehemence of a sudden impulse of delight, of rapture, which she could not suppress; but the instant after, she would have given worlds to recall the exclamation.

"Yes, Viola, I might love thee; but in that love what sorrow and what change! The flower gives perfume to the rock on whose heart it grows. A little while, and the flower is dead; but the rock still endures—the snow at its breast, the sunshine on its summit. Pause—think well. Danger besets thee yet. For some days thou shalt be safe from thy remorseless persecutor; but the hour soon comes when thy only security will be in flight. If the Englishman love thee worthily, thy honor will be dear to him as his own; if not, there are yet other lands where love will be truer, and virtue less in danger from fraud and force. Farewell; my own destiny I cannot foresee except through cloud and shadow. I know, at least, that we shall meet again; but learn ere then, sweet flower, that there are more genial resting-places than the rock."

He turned as he spoke, and gained the outer door where Gionetta discreetly stood. Zanoni lightly laid his hand on her arm. With the gay accent of a jesting cavalier, he said:

"The Signor Glyndon woos your mistress; he may wed her. I know your love for her. Disabuse her of any caprice for me. I am a bird ever on the wing."

He dropped a purse into Gionetta's hand as he spoke, and was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

"Les Intelligences Célestes se font voir, et se communiquent plus volontiers, dans le silence, et dans la tranquillité de la solitude. On aura donc une petite chambre ou un cabinet secret," etc.—*Les Clavicules de Rabbi Salomon*, chap. 3; *traduites exactement du texte Hebreu par M. Pierre Morissoneau, Professeur des Langues Orientales, et Sectateur de la Philosophie des Sages Cabalistes.* (*Manuscript Translation.*)

THE Palace retained by Zanoni was in one of the less frequented quarters of the city. It still stands, now ruined and dismantled, a monument of the splendor of a chivalry long since vanished from Naples, with the lordly races of the Norman and the Spaniard.

As he entered the rooms reserved for his private hours, two Indians, in the dress of their country, received him at the threshold with the grave salutations of the East. They had accompanied him from the far lands in which, according to rumor, he had for many years fixed his home. But they could communicate nothing to gratify curiosity or justify suspicion. They spoke no language but their own. With the exception of these two, his princely retinue was composed of the native hirelings of the city, whom his lavish but imperious generosity made the implicit creatures of his will. In his house, and in his habits, so far as they were seen, there was nothing to account for the rumors which were circulated abroad. He was not, as we are told of Albertus Magnus or the great Leonardo da Vinci, served by airy forms; and no brazen image, the invention of magic mechanism, communicated to him the influences of the stars. None of the apparatus of the alchemist—the crucible, and the metals—gave solemnity to his chambers, or accounted for his wealth; nor did he even seem to interest himself in those serener studies which might be supposed to color his peculiar conversation with abstract notions, and often with recondite learning. No books spoke to him in his solitude; and if ever he had drawn from them his knowledge, it seemed now that the only page he read was the wide one of Nature, and that a capacious and startling memory supplied the rest. Yet there was one exception to what in all else seemed customary and commonplace, and which, according to the authority we have prefixed to this chapter, might indicate the follower of the occult sciences. Whether at Rome or Naples, or, in fact, wherever his abode, he selected one room

* The Celestial Intelligences exhibit and explain themselves most freely in the silence and tranquillity of solitude. One will have then a little chamber, or a secret cabinet, etc.

remote from the rest of the house, which was fastened by a lock scarcely larger than the seal of a ring, yet which sufficed to baffle the most cunning instruments of the locksmith; at least, one of his servants, prompted by irresistible curiosity, had made the attempt in vain; and though he had fancied it was tried in the most favorable time for secrecy—not a soul near, in the dead of night, Zanoni himself absent from home—yet his superstition, or his conscience, told him the reason why the next day the Major Domo quietly dismissed him. He compensated himself for the misfortune by spreading his own story, with a thousand amusing exaggerations. He declared that, as he approached the door, invisible hands seemed to pluck him away; and that when he touched the lock, he was struck as by a palsy to the ground. One surgeon, who heard the tale, observed, to the distaste of the wonder-mongers, that possibly Zanoni made a dexterous use of electricity. Howbeit, this room, once so secured, was never entered save by Zanoni himself.

The solemn voice of Time, from the neighboring church, at last aroused the lord of the palace from the deep and motionless revery, rather resembling a trance than thought, in which his mind was absorbed.

"It is one more sand out of the mighty Hour-glass," said he murmuringly, "and yet time neither adds to, nor steals from, an atom in the Infinite! Soul of mine, the luminous, the Augoeides,* why descendest thou from thy sphere? Why from the eternal, starlike, and passionless Serene, shrinkest thou back to the mists of the dark sarcophagus? How long, too austerely taught that companionship with the things that die brings with it but sorrow in its sweetness, hast thou dwelt contented with thy majestic solitude?"

As he thus murmured, one of the earliest birds that salute the dawn broke into sudden song from amidst the orange trees in the garden below his casement. And as suddenly song answered song; the mate, awakened at the note, gave back its happy answer to the bird. He listened; and not the soul he had questioned, but the heart replied. He rose, and with restless strides paced the narrow floor. "Away from this world!"

* Αὐγοειδης—a word favored by the mystical Platonists,—σφαιρα ψυχης αὐγοειδης, ὁταν μητε ἐκτεινηται ἐπι τι, μητε ἐσω συντρεχη μητε συνιζανη ἀλλα φωτι λαμπηται, ᾧ την ἀληθειαν ὁρᾳ την παντων, και την ἐν αὐτῃ.—Marc. Ant., lib. 2.

The sense of which beautiful sentence of the old philosophy, which, as Bayle well observes, in his article on Cornelius Agrippa, the modern Quietists have (however impotently) sought to imitate, is to the effect that "the sphere of the soul is luminous, when nothing external has contact with the soul itself; but when lit by its own light, it sees the truth of all things and the truth centered in itself."

he exclaimed at length, with an impatient tone. "Can no time loosen its fatal ties? As the attraction that holds the earth in space, is the attraction that fixes the soul to earth. Away, from the dark-gray planet! Break, ye fetters; arise, ye wings!"

He passed through the silent galleries, and up the lofty stairs, and entered the secret chamber.

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CHAPTER V.

"I and my fellows
Are ministers of Fate."

—*The Tempest.*

THE next day, Glyndon bent his steps towards Zanoni's palace. The young man's imagination, naturally inflammable, was singularly excited by the little he had seen and heard of this strange being: a spell, he could neither master nor account for, attracted him towards the stranger. Zanoni's power seemed mysterious and great, his motives kindly and benevolent, yet his manners chilling and repellent. Why at one moment reject Glyndon's acquaintance, at another save him from danger? How had Zanoni thus acquired the knowledge of enemies unknown to Glyndon himself? His interest was deeply aroused, his gratitude appealed to; he resolved to make another effort to conciliate the ungracious herbalist.

The Signor was at home, and Glyndon was admitted into a lofty saloon, where in a few moments Zanoni joined him.

"I am come to thank you for your warning last night," said he, "and to entreat you to complete my obligation by informing me of the quarter to which I may look for enmity and peril."

"You are gallant," said Zanoni with a smile, and in the English language, "and do you know so little of the South as not to be aware that gallants have always rivals?"

"Are you serious?" said Glyndon, coloring.

"Most serious. You love Viola Pisani; you have for rival one of the most powerful and relentless of the Neapolitan princes. Your danger is indeed great."

"But pardon me. How came it known to you?"

"I give no account of myself to mortal man," replied Zanoni haughtily; "and to me it matters nothing whether you regard or scorn my warning."

"Well, if I may not question you, be it so; but at least advise me what to do."

"Would you follow my advice?"

"Why not?"

"Because you are constitutionally brave; you are fond of excitement and mystery; you like to be the hero of a romance. Were I to advise you to leave Naples, would you do so while Naples contains a foe to confront, or a mistress to pursue?"

"You are right," said the young Englishman with energy. "No! and you cannot reproach me for such a resolution."

"But there is another course left to you: Do you love Viola Pisani truly and fervently? If so, marry her, and take a bride to your native land."

"Nay," answered Glyndon, embarrassed; "Viola is not of my rank. Her profession, too, is—in short, I am enslaved by her beauty, but I cannot wed her."

Zanoni frowned.

"Your love, then, is but selfish lust, and I advise you to your own happiness no more. Young man, Destiny is less inexorable than it appears. The resources of the great Ruler of the Universe are not so scanty and so stern as to deny to men the divine privilege of Free Will; all of us can carve out our own way, and God can make our very contradictions harmonize with His solemn ends. You have before you an option. Honorable and generous love may even now work out your happiness, and effect your escape; a frantic and selfish passion will but lead you to misery and doom."

"Do you pretend, then, to read the Future?"

"I have said all that it pleases me to utter."

"While you assume the moralist to me, Signor Zanoni," said Glyndon, with a smile, "are you yourself so indifferent to youth and beauty, as to act the stoic to its allurements?"

"If it were necessary that practice square with precept," said Zanoni, with a bitter smile, "our monitors would be but few. The conduct of the individual can affect but a small circle beyond himself; the permanent good or evil that he works to others lies rather in the sentiments he can diffuse. His acts are limited and momentary; his sentiments may pervade the universe, and inspire generations till the day of doom. All our virtues, all our laws, are drawn from books and maxims, which *are* sentiments, not from deeds. In conduct, Julian had the virtues of a Christian, and Constantine the vices of a Pagan. The sentiments of Julian reconverted thousands to Paganism; those of Constantine helped, under Heaven's will, to bow to

Christianity the nations of the earth. In conduct, the humblest fisherman on yonder sea, who believes in the miracles of San Gennaro, may be a better man than Luther. To the sentiments of Luther the mind of modern Europe is indebted for the noblest revolution it has known. Our opinions, young Englishman, are the angel part of us; our acts, the earthly."

"You have reflected deeply for an Italian," said Glyndon.

"Who told you I was an Italian?"

"Are you not? And yet, when I hear you speak my own language as a native, I—"

"Tush!" interrupted Zanoni, impatiently turning away. Then, after a pause, he resumed in a mild voice: "Glyndon, do you renounce Viola Pisani? Will you take some days to consider what I have said?"

"Renounce her—never!"

"Then you will marry her?"

"Impossible!"

"Be it so: she will then renounce you. I tell you that you have rivals."

"Yes; the Prince di ——; but I do not fear him."

"You have another, whom you will fear more."

"And who is he?"

"Myself."

Glyndon turned pale and started from his seat.

"You, Signor Zanoni! You—and you dare to tell me so?"

"Dare! Alas! there are times when I wish that I could fear."

These arrogant words were not uttered arrogantly, but in a tone of the most mournful dejection. Glyndon was enraged, confounded, and yet awed. However, he had a brave English heart within his breast, and he recovered himself quickly.

"Signor," said he calmly, "I am not to be duped by these solemn phrases and these mystical assumptions. You may have powers which I cannot comprehend or emulate, or you may be but a keen impostor."

"Well, proceed!"

"I mean, then," continued Glyndon resolutely, though somewhat disconcerted, "I mean you to understand, that, though I am not to be persuaded or compelled by a stranger to marry Viola Pisani, I am not the less determined never tamely to yield her to another."

Zanoni looked gravely at the young man, whose sparkling eye and heightened color testified the spirit to support his words, and replied: "So bold! Well; it becomes you. But

take my advice: wait yet nine days, and tell me then if you will marry the fairest and the purest creature that ever crossed your path."

"But if you love her, why—why—"

"Why am I anxious that she would wed another: to save her from myself! Listen to me. That girl, humble and uneducated though she be, has in her the seeds of the most lofty qualities and virtues. She can be all to the man she loves: all that man can desire in wife. Her soul, developed by affection, will elevate your own; it will influence your fortunes, exalt your destiny: you will become a great and a prosperous man. If, on the contrary, she fall to me, I know not what may be her lot; but I know that there is an ordeal which few can pass, and which hitherto no woman has survived."

As Zanoni spoke, his face became colorless, and there was something in his voice that froze the warm blood of the listener.

"What is this mystery which surrounds you?" exclaimed Glyndon, unable to repress his emotion. "Are you, in truth, different from other men? Have you passed the boundary of lawful knowledge? Are you, as some declare, a sorcerer, or only a—"

"Hush?" interrupted Zanoni gently, and with a smile of singular but melancholy sweetness: "Have you earned the right to ask me these questions? Though Italy still boast an Inquisition, its power is rivelled as a leaf which the first wind shall scatter. The days of torture and persecution are over; and a man may live as he pleases, and talk as it suits him, without fear of the stake and the rack. Since I can defy persecution, pardon me if I do not yield to curiosity."

Glyndon blushed and rose. In spite of his love for Viola, and his natural terror of such a rival, he felt himself irresistibly drawn towards the very man he had most cause to suspect and dread. He held out his hand to Zanoni, saying: "Well, then, if we were to be rivals our swords must settle our rights: till then I would fain be friends."

"Friends! You know not what you ask."

"Enigmas again!"

"Enigmas!" cried Zanoni passionately. "Ay! can you dare to solve them? Not till then could I give you my right hand, and call you friend."

"I could dare everything and all things for the attainment of superhuman wisdom," said Glyndon, and his countenance was lighted up with wild and intense enthusiasm.

Zanoni observed him in thoughtful silence.

"The seeds of the ancestor live in the son," he muttered; "he may—yet—" He broke off abruptly; then, speaking aloud: "Go, Glyndon," said he: "we shall meet again, but I will not ask your answer till the hour presses for decision."

CHAPTER VI.

"'Tis certain that this man has an estate of fifty thousand livres, and seems to be a person of very great accomplishments. But then, if he's a Wizard, are wizards so devoutly given as this man seems to be? In short, I could make neither head nor tail on't."—THE COUNT DE GABALIS, Translation affixed to the Second Edition of the "Rape of the Lock."

OF all the weaknesses which little men rail against, there is none that they are more apt to ridicule than the tendency to believe. And of all the signs of a corrupt heart and a feeble head, the tendency of incredulity is the surest.

Real philosophy seeks rather to solve than to deny. While we hear, every day, the small pretenders to science talk of the absurdities of Alchemy and the dream of the Philosopher's Stone, a more erudite knowledge is aware that by Alchemists the greatest discoveries in science have been made, and much which still seems abstruse, had we the key to the mystic phraseology they were compelled to adopt, might open the way to yet more noble acquisitions. The Philosopher's Stone itself has seemed no visionary chimera to some of the soundest chemists that even the present century has produced.* Man cannot contradict the Laws of Nature. But are all the Laws of Nature yet discovered?

"Give me a proof of your Art," says the rational inquirer. "When I have seen the effect, I will endeavor, with you, to ascertain the causes."

Somewhat to the above effect were the first thoughts of Clarence Glyndon on quitting Zanoni. But Clarence Glyndon was *no* "rational inquirer." The more vague and mysterious the language of Zanoni, the more it imposed upon him. A proof would have been something tangible, with which he would have sought to grapple. And it would have only disappointed his curiosity to find the supernatural reduced to Nature. He endeavored, in vain, at some moments rousing himself from cre-

* Mr. D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature" (article Alchemy), after quoting the sanguine judgments of modern chemists, as to the transmutation of metals, observes, of one yet greater and more recent than those to which Glyndon's thoughts could have referred: "Sir Humphry Davy told me that he did not consider this undiscovered art as impossible; but should it ever be discovered, it would certainly be useless."

dulity to the scepticism he deprecated, to reconcile what he had heard with the probable motives and designs of an impostor. Unlike Mesmer and Cagliostro, Zanoni, whatever his pretensions, did not make them a source of profit, nor was Glyndon's position or rank in life sufficient to render any influence obtained over his mind, subservient to schemes, whether of avarice or ambition. Yet, ever and anon, with the suspicion of worldly knowledge, he strove to persuade himself that Zanoni had at least some sinister object in inducing him to what his English pride and manner of thought considered a derogatory marriage with the poor actress. Might not Viola and the Mystic be in league with each other? Might not all this jargon of prophecy and menace be but artifices to dupe him? He felt an unjust resentment towards Viola, at her having secured such an ally. But with that resentment was mingled a natural jealousy. Zanoni threatened him with rivalry. Zanoni, who, whatever his character or his arts, possessed at least all the external attributes that dazzle and command. Impatient of his own doubts, he plunged into the society of such acquaintances as he had made at Naples: chiefly artists, like himself, men of letters, and the rich commercialists, who were already vying with the splendor, though debarred from the privileges, of the nobles. From these he heard much of Zanoni, already with them, as with the idler classes, an object of curiosity and speculation.

He had noticed, as a thing remarkable, that Zanoni had conversed with him in English, and with a command of the language so complete that he might have passed for a native. On the other hand, in Italian Zanoni was equally at ease. Glyndon found that it was the same in languages less usually learned by foreigners. A painter from Sweden, who had conversed with him, was positive that he was a Swede; and a merchant from Constantinople, who had sold some of his goods to Zanoni, professed his conviction that none but a Turk, or at least a native of the East, could have so thoroughly mastered the soft Oriental intonations. Yet in all these languages, when they came to compare their several recollections, there was a slight, scarcely perceptible distinction, not in pronunciation, nor even accent, but in the key and chime, as it were, of the voice, between himself and a native. This faculty was one which, Glyndon called to mind, that sect whose tenets and powers have never been more than most partially explored, the Rosicrucians, especially arrogated. He remembered to have heard in Germany of the work of John Bringeret,* asserting

* Printed in 1615.

that all the languages of earth were known to the genuine Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross. Did Zanoni belong to this mystical Fraternity, who, in an earlier age, boasted of secrets of which the Philosopher's Stone was but the least; who considered themselves the heirs of all that the Chaldæans, the Magi, the Gymnosophists, and the Platonists had taught; and who differed from all the darker Sons of Magic in the virtue of their lives, the purity of their doctrines, and their insisting, as the foundation of all wisdom, on the subjugation of the senses, and the intensity of Religious Faith? A glorious sect, if they lied not! And, in truth, if Zanoni had powers beyond the race of worldly sages, they seemed not unworthily exercised. The little known of his life was in his favor. Some acts, not of indiscriminate, but judicious, generosity, and beneficence, were recorded; in repeating which, still, however, the narrators shook their heads, and expressed surprise how a stranger should have possessed so minute a knowledge of the quiet and obscure distresses he had relieved. Two or three sick persons, when abandoned by their physicians, he had visited and conferred with alone. They had recovered; they ascribed to him their recovery; yet they could not tell by what medicines they had been healed. They could only depose that he came, conversed with them, and they were cured; it usually, however, happened that a deep sleep had preceded the recovery.

Another circumstance was also beginning to be remarked, and spoke yet more in his commendation. Those with whom he principally associated—the gay, the dissipated, the thoughtless, the sinners and publicans of the more polished world—all appeared rapidly, yet insensibly to themselves, to awaken to purer thoughts and more regulated lives. Even Cetoxa, the prince of gallants. duellists, and gamesters, was no longer the same man since the night of the singular events which he had related to Glyndon. The first trace of his reform was in his retirement from the gaming-houses; the next was his reconciliation with an hereditary enemy of his house, whom it had been his constant object for the last six years to entangle in such a quarrel as might call forth his inimitable manœuvre of the *stoccata*. Nor when Cetoxa and his young companions were heard to speak of Zanoni, did it seem that this change had been brought about by any sober lectures or admonitions. They all described Zanoni as a man keenly alive to enjoyment; of manners, the reverse of formal; not precisely gay, but equable, serene, and cheerful; ever ready to listen to the talk of others, however idle, or to charm all ears with an inexhaust-

ible fund of brilliant anecdote and worldly experience. All manners, all nations, all grades of men seemed familiar to him. He was reserved only if allusion were ever ventured to his birth or history. The more general opinion of his origin certainly seemed the more plausible. His riches, his familiarity with the languages of the East, his residence in India, a certain gravity which never deserted his most cheerful and familiar hours, the lustrous darkness of his eyes and hair, and even the peculiarities of his shape, in the delicate smallness of the hands, and the Arab-like turn of the stately head, appeared to fix him as belonging to one at least of the Oriental races. And a dabbler in the Eastern tongues even sought to reduce the simple name of Zanoni, which a century before had been borne by an inoffensive naturalist of Bologna,* to the radicals of the extinct language, Zan was unquestionably the Chaldæan appellation for the sun. Even the Greeks, who mutilated every Oriental name, had retained the right one in this case, as the Cretan inscription on the tomb of Zeus † significantly showed. As to the rest, the Zan, or Zaun, was, with the Sidonians, no uncommon prefix to On. Adonis was but another name for Zanonas, whose worship in Sidon Hesychius records. To this profound and unanswerable derivation, Mervale listened with great attention, and observed that he now ventured to announce an erudite discovery he himself had long since made, viz., that the numerous family of Smiths in England were undoubtedly the ancient priests of the Phrygian Apollo. "For," said he, "was not Apollo's surname, in Phrygia, Smintheus? How clear all the ensuing corruptions of the august name—Smintheus—Smitheus—Smithé—Smith! And even now, I may remark that the more ancient branches of that illustrious family, unconsciously anxious to approximate at least by a letter nearer to the true title, take a pious pleasure in writing their names Smithe!"

The Philologist was much struck with this discovery, and begged Mervale's permission to note it down as an illustration suitable to a work he was about to publish on the origin of languages, to be called "Babel," and published in three quartos by subscription.

* The author of two works on botany and rare plants.

† Ὧδε μεγας κειται Ζαν.*—*Cyril contra Julian.*

* Here lies great Jove.

CHAPTER VII.

"Learn to be poor in spirit, my son, if you would penetrate that sacred night which environs truth. Learn of the Sages to allow to the Devils no power in nature, since the fatal stone has shut 'em up in the depth of the abyss. Learn of the Philosophers always to look for natural causes in all extraordinary events; and when such natural causes are wanting, recur to God."—THE COUNT DE GABALIS.

ALL these additions to his knowledge of Zanoni, picked up in the various lounging places and resorts that he frequented, were unsatisfactory to Glyndon. That night Viola did not perform at the theatre; and the next day, still disturbed by bewildered fancies, and averse to the sober and sarcastic companionship of Mervale, Glyndon sauntered musingly into the public gardens, and paused under the very tree under which he had first heard the voice that had exercised upon his mind so singular an influence. The gardens were deserted. He threw himself on one of the seats placed beneath the shade; and again, in the midst of his revery, the same cold shudder came over him which Zanoni had so distinctly defined, and to which he had ascribed so extraordinary a cause.

He roused himself with a sudden effort, and started to see, seated next to him, a figure hideous enough to have personated one of the malignant beings of whom Zanoni had spoken. It was a small man, dressed in a fashion strikingly at variance with the elaborate costume of the day. An affectation of homeliness and poverty approaching to squalor, in the loose trousers, coarse as a ship's sail, in the rough jacket, which appeared rent wilfully into holes, and the black, ragged, tangled locks that streamed from their confinement under a woollen cap, accorded but ill with other details which spoke of comparative wealth. The shirt, open at the throat, was fastened by a brooch of gaudy stones; and two pendent massive gold chains announced the foppery of two watches.

The man's figure, if not absolutely deformed, was yet marvellously ill favored; his shoulders high and square; his chest flattened, as if crushed in; his gloveless hands were knotted at the joints, and large, bony, and muscular, dangled from lean, emaciated wrists, as if not belonging to them. His features had the painful distortion sometimes seen in the countenance of a cripple: large, exaggerated, with the nose nearly touching the chin; the eyes small, but glowing with a cunning fire as they dwelt on Glyndon; and the mouth was twisted into a grin that displayed rows of jagged, black, broken

teeth. Yet over this frightful face there still played a kind of disagreeable intelligence, an expression at once astute and bold; and as Glyndon, recovering from the first impression, looked again at his neighbor, he blushed at his own dismay, and recognized a French artist, with whom he had formed an acquaintance, and who was possessed of no inconsiderable talents in his calling. Indeed, it was to be remarked that this creature, whose externals were so deserted by the Graces, particularly delighted in designs aspiring to majesty and grandeur. Though his coloring was hard and shallow, as was that generally of the French school at the time, his *drawings* were admirable for symmetry, simple elegance, and classic vigor; at the same time they unquestionably wanted ideal grace. He was fond of selecting subjects from Roman History, rather than from the copious world of Grecian beauty, or those still more sublime stories of scriptural record from which Raffaele and Michel Angelo borrowed their inspirations. His grandeur was that, not of gods and saints, but mortals. His delineation of beauty was that which the eye cannot blame and the soul does not acknowledge. In a word, as it was said of Dionysius, he was an Anthropographos, or Painter of Men. It was also a notable contradiction in this person, who was addicted to the most extravagant excesses in every passion, whether of hate or love, implacable in revenge, and insatiable in debauch, that he was in the habit of uttering the most beautiful sentiments of exalted purity and genial philanthropy. The world was not good enough for him; he was, to use the expressive German phrase, *a world-betterer!* Nevertheless, his sarcastic lip often seemed to mock the sentiments he uttered, as if it sought to insinuate that he was above even the world he would construct.

Finally, this painter was in close correspondence with the Republicans of Paris, and was held to be one of those missionaries whom, from the earliest period of the Revolution, the regenerators of mankind were pleased to dispatch to the various States yet shackled, whether by actual tyranny, or wholesome laws. Certainly, as the historian of Italy* has observed, there was no city in Italy where these new doctrines would be received with greater favor than Naples, partly from the lively temper of the people, principally because the most hateful feudal privileges, however partially curtailed some years before by the great minister, Tanuccini, still presented so many daily and practical evils as to make change wear a more substantial

* Botta.

charm than the mere and meretricious bloom on the cheek of the harlot—Novelty. This man, whom I will call Jean Nicot, was, therefore, an oracle among the younger and bolder spirits of Naples; and before Glyndon had met Zanoni, the former had not been among the least dazzled by the eloquent aspirations of the hideous philanthropist.

"It is so long since we have met, *cher confrère*," said Nicot, drawing his seat nearer to Glyndon's, "that you cannot be surprised that I see you with delight, and even take the liberty to intrude on your meditations."

"They were of no agreeable nature," said Glyndon; "and never was intrusion more welcome."

"You will be charmed to hear," said Nicot, drawing several letters from his bosom, "that the good work proceeds with marvellous rapidity. Mirabeau, indeed, is no more; but, *mort Diable!* the French people are now a Mirabeau themselves." With this remark, Monsieur Nicot proceeded to read and to comment upon several animated and interesting passages in his correspondence, in which the word Virtue was introduced twenty-seven times, and God not once. And then, warmed by the cheering prospects thus opened to him, he began to indulge in those anticipations of the future, the outline of which we have already seen in the eloquent extravagance of Condorcet. All the Old Virtues were dethroned for a new Pantheon: Patriotism was a narrow sentiment; Philanthropy was to be its successor. No love that did not embrace all mankind, as warm for Indus and the Pole as for the hearth of home, was worthy the breast of a generous man. Opinion was to be free as air; and in order to make it so, it was necessary to exterminate all those whose opinions were not the same as Mons. Jean Nicot's. Much of this amused, much revolted, Glyndon; but when the painter turned to dwell upon a science that all should comprehend, and the results of which all should enjoy; a science that springing from the soil of equal institutions and equal mental cultivation, should give to all the races of men wealth without labor, and a life longer than the Patriarchs' without care—then Glyndon listened with interest and admiration, not unmixed with awe. "Observe," said Nicot, "how much that we now cherish as a virtue will then be rejected as meanness. Our oppressors, for instance, preach to us of the excellence of gratitude. Gratitude, the confession of inferiority! What so hateful to a noble spirit as the humiliating sense of obligation? But where there is equality there can be no means for power thus to enslave merit. The benefactor and the client will alike cease, and—"

"And in the mean time," said a low voice, at hand, "in the mean time, Jean Nicot?"

The two artists started, and Glyndon recognized Zanoni.

He gazed with a brow of unusual sternness on Nicot, who, lumped together as he sate, looked up at him askew, and with an expression of fear and dismay upon his distorted countenance.

Ho, ho! Messire Jean Nicot, thou who fearest neither God nor Devil, why fearest thou the eye of a Man?

"It is not the first time I have been a witness to your opinions on the infirmity of gratitude," said Zanoni.

Nicot suppressed an exclamation, and, after gloomily surveying Zanoni with an eye villanous and sinister, but full of hate impotent and unutterable, said: "I know you not; what would you of me?"

"Your absence. Leave us!"

Nicot sprung forward a step, with hands clenched, and showing his teeth from ear to ear, like a wild beast incensed. Zanoni stood motionless, and smiled at him in scorn. Nicot halted abruptly, as if fixed and fascinated by the look, shivered from head to foot, and sullenly, and with a visible effort, as if impelled by a power not his own, turned away.

Glyndon's eyes followed him in surprise.

"And what know you of this man?" said Zanoni.

"I know him as one like myself—a follower of art."

"Of ART! Do not so profane that glorious word. What Nature is to God, Art should be to Man—a sublime, beneficent, genial, and warm creation. That wretch may be a *painter*, not an *artist*."

"And pardon me if I ask what *you* know of one you thus disparage?"

"I know thus much, that you are beneath my care if it be necessary to warn you against him; his own lips show the hideousness of his heart. Why should I tell you of the crimes he has committed! He *speaks* crime!"

"You do not seem, Signor Zanoni, to be one of the admirers of the dawning Revolution. Perhaps you are prejudiced against the man because you dislike the opinions?"

"What opinions?"

Glyndon paused, somewhat puzzled to define; but at length he said, "Nay, I must wrong you; for you, of all men, I suppose, cannot discredit the doctrine that preaches the infinite improvement of the human species."

"You are right; the few in every age improve the many; the

many now may be as wise as the few were; but improvement is at a standstill, if you tell me that the many now are as wise as the few *are*."

"I comprehend you; you will not allow the law of universal equality!"

"Law! If the whole world conspired to enforce the falsehood, they could not make it *law*. Level all conditions to-day, and you only smooth away all obstacles to tyranny to-morrow. A nation that aspires to *equality* is unfit for *freedom*. Throughout all creation, from the archangel to the worm, from Olympus to the pebble, from the radiant and completed planet to the nebula that hardens through ages of mist and slime into the habitable world, the first law of nature is inequality."

"Harsh doctrine, if applied to States. Are the cruel disparities of life never to be removed?"

"Disparities of the *physical* life? Oh, let us hope so. But disparities of the *intellectual* and the *moral*, never! Universal equality of intelligence, of mind, of genius, of virtue! No teacher left to the world, no men wiser, better than others—were it not an impossible condition, *what a hopeless prospect for humanity!* No; while the world lasts, the sun will gild the mountain top before it shines upon the plain. Diffuse all the knowledge the earth contains equally over all mankind to-day, and some men will be wiser than the rest to-morrow. And *this* is not a harsh, but a loving law: the *real* law of Improvement; the wiser the few in one generation, the wiser will be the multitude the next!"

As Zanoni thus spoke, they moved on through the smiling gardens, and the beautiful bay lay sparkling in the noontide. A gentle breeze just cooled the sunbeam, and stirred the ocean; and in the inexpressible clearness of the atmosphere, there was something that rejoiced the senses. The very soul seemed to grow lighter and purer in that lucid air.

"And these men, to commence their era of improvement and equality, are jealous even of the Creator. They would deny an Intelligence—a God!" said Zanoni, as if involuntarily. "Are you an artist, and, looking on the world, can you listen to such a dogma? Between God and Genius there is a necessary link; there is almost a correspondent language. Well said the Pythagorean:* 'A good intellect is the chorus of divinity.'"

Struck and touched with these sentiments, which he little expected to fall from one to whom he ascribed those powers which the superstitions of childhood ascribe to the darker agencies,

* Sextus, the Pythagorean.

Glyndon said: "And yet you have confessed that your life, separated from that of others, is one that man should dread to share. Is there then a connection between magic and religion?"

"Magic! And what is magic? When the traveller beholds in Persia the ruins of palaces and temples, the ignorant inhabitants inform him they were the work of magicians! What is beyond their own power, the vulgar cannot comprehend to be lawfully in the power of others. But if by magic you mean a perpetual research amongst all that is more latent and obscure in nature, I answer, I profess that magic, and that he who does so comes but nearer to the fountain of all belief. Knowest thou not that magic was taught in the schools of old? But how, and by whom? As the last and most solemn lesson, by the Priests who ministered to the temple.† And you, who would be a painter, is not there a magic also in the art you would advance? Must you not, after long study of the Beautiful that has been, seize upon new and airy combinations of a beauty that is to be? See you not that The Grander Art, whether of poet or of painter, ever seeking for the TRUE, abhors the REAL; that you must seize Nature as her master, not lackey her as her slave? You demand mastery over the past, a conception of the future. Has not the Art that is truly noble for its domain the Future and the Past? You would conjure the invisible beings to your charm; and what is painting but the fixing into substance the Invisible? Are you discontented with this world? This world was never meant for genius! To exist, it must create another. What magician can do more; nay, what science can do as much? There are two avenues from the little passions and the drear calamities of earth; both lead to heaven and away from hell—Art and Science. But art is more godlike than science; science discovers, art creates. You have faculties that may command art; be contented with your lot. The astronomer who catalogues the stars cannot add one atom to the universe; the poet can call an universe from the atom; the chemist may heal with his drugs the infirmities of the human form; the painter, or the sculptor, fixes into everlasting youth forms divine, which no disease can ravage, and no years impair. Renounce those wandering fancies that lead you now to myself, and now to yon orator of the human race; to us two who are the antipodes of each other! Your pencil is your wand; your canvas may raise Utopias fairer than Condorcet dreams of. I press not yet for

† Psellus de Dæmon. (MS.)

your decision; but what man of genius ever asked more to cheer his path to the grave, than love and glory?"

"But," said Glyndon, fixing his eyes earnestly on Zanoni, "if there be a power to baffle the grave itself—"

Zanoni's brow darkened. "And were this so," he said, after a pause, "would it be so sweet a lot to outlive all you loved, and to recoil from every human tie? Perhaps the fairest immortality on earth is that of a noble name."

"You do not answer me, you equivocate. I have read of the long lives, far beyond the date common experience assigns to man," persisted Glyndon, "which some of the alchemists enjoyed. Is the golden elixir but a fable?"

"If not, and these men discovered it, they died, because they refused to live! There may be a mournful warning in your conjecture. Turn once more to the easel and the canvas!"

So saying, Zanoni waved his hand, and, with downcast eyes and a slow step, bent his way back into the city.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Goddess Wisdom.

"To some she is the goddess great;
To some the milch cow of the field;
Their care is but to calculate
What butter she will yield."—Schiller.

This last conversation with Zanoni left upon the mind of Glyndon a tranquillizing and salutary effect. From the confused mists of his fancy glittered forth again those happy, golden schemes which part from the young ambition of art, to play in the air, to illumine the space, like rays that kindle from the sun. And with these projects mingled also the vision of a love purer and serener than his life yet had known. His mind went back into that fair childhood of genius, when the forbidden fruit is not yet tasted, and we know of no land beyond the Eden which is gladdened by an Eve. Insensibly before him there rose the scenes of a home, with his art sufficing for all excitement, and Viola's love circling occupation with happiness and content; and in the midst of these phantasies of a future that might be at his command, he was recalled to the present by the clear, strong voice of Mervale, the man of common-sense.

Whoever has studied the lives of persons in whom the imagination is stronger than the will, who suspect their own knowledge

of actual life, and are aware of their facility to impressions, will have observed the influence which a homely, vigorous, worldly understanding obtains over such natures. It was thus with Glyndon. His friend had often extricated him from danger, and saved him from the consequences of imprudence: and there was something in Mervale's voice alone that damped his enthusiasm, and often made him yet more ashamed of noble impulses than weak conduct. For Mervale, though a downright honest man, could not sympathize with the extravagance of generosity any more than with that of presumption and credulity. He walked the straight line of life, and felt an equal contempt for the man who wandered up the hillsides, no matter whether to chase a butterfly or to catch a prospect of the ocean.

"I will tell you your thoughts, Clarence," said Mervale, laughing, "though I am no Zanoni. I know them by the moisture of your eyes and the half smile on your lips. You are musing upon that fair perdition, the little singer of San Carlo."

The little singer of San Carlo! Glyndon colored as he answered:

"Would you speak thus of her if she were my wife?"

"No! For then any contempt I might venture to feel would be for yourself. One may dislike the duper, but it is the dupe that one despises."

"Are you sure that I should be the dupe in such a union? Where can I find one so lovely and so innocent? Where one whose virtue has been tried by such temptation? Does even a single breath of slander sully the name of Viola Pisani?"

"I know not all the gossip of Naples, and therefore cannot answer; but I know this, that in England no one would believe that a young Englishman, of good fortune and respectable birth, who marries a singer from the Theatre at Naples, has not been lamentably taken in. I would save you from a fall of position so irretrievable. Think how many mortifications you will be subjected to; how many young men will visit at your house, and how many young wives will as carefully avoid it."

"I can choose my own career, to which commonplace society is not essential. I can owe the respect of the world to my art, and not to the accidents of birth and fortune."

"That is, you still persist in your second folly: the absurd ambition of daubing canvas. Heaven forbid I should say anything against the laudable industry of one who follows such a profession for the sake of subsistence; but with means and con-

nections that will raise you in life, why voluntarily sink into a mere artist? As an accomplishment in leisure moments, it is all very well in its way; but as the occupation of existence, it is a frenzy."

"Artists have been the friends of princes."

"Very rarely so, I fancy in sober England. There in the great centre of political aristocracy, what men respect is the practical, not the ideal. Just suffer me to draw two pictures of my own. Clarence Glyndon returns to England; he marries a lady of fortune equal to his own, of friends and parentage that advance rational ambition. Clarence Glyndon, thus a wealthy and respectable man, of good talents, of bustling energies then concentrated, enters into practical life. He has a house at which he can receive those whose acquaintance is both advantage and honor; he has leisure which he can devote to useful studies; his reputation, built on a solid base, grows in men's mouths. He attaches himself to a party; he enters political life; his new connections serve to promote his objects. At the age of five-and-forty, what, in all probability, may Clarence Glyndon be? Since you are ambitious, I leave that question for you to decide! Now turn to the other picture. Clarence Glyndon returns to England with a wife who can bring him no money, unless he lets her out on the stage; so handsome that every one asks who she is, and every one hears—the celebrated singer, Pisani. Clarence Glyndon shuts himself up to grind colors and paint pictures in the grand historical school, which nobody buys. There is even a prejudice against him, as not having studied in the Academy, as being an amateur. Who is Mr. Clarence Glyndon? Oh, the celebrated Pisani's husband! What else? Oh, he exhibits those large pictures. Poor man! They have merit in their way; but Teniers and Watteau are more convenient, and almost as cheap. Clarence Glyndon, with an easy fortune while single, has a large family, which his fortune, unaided by marriage, can just rear up to callings more plebeian than his own. He retires into the country, to save and to paint; he grows slovenly and discontented; 'the world does not appreciate him,' he says, and he runs away from the world. At the age of forty-five, what will be Clarence Glyndon? Your ambition shall decide that question also."

"If all men were as worldly as you," said Glyndon, rising, "there would never have been an artist or a poet!"

"Perhaps we should do just as well without them," answered Mervale. "Is it not time to think of dinner? The mullets here are remarkably fine."

CHAPTER IX.

"Wollt ihr hoch auf ihren Flugeln schweben,
Werft die Angst des Irdischen von euch!
Fliehet aus dem engen dumpfen Leben
In des Ideales Reich!"—*Das Ideal und das Leben.*

Wouldst thou soar heavenward on its joyous wing?
Cast off the earthly burthen of the Real;
High from this cramp'd and dungeon'd being, spring
Into the realm of the Ideal.

As some injudicious master lowers and vitiates the taste of the student by fixing his attention to what he falsely calls the Natural, but which, in reality, is the Commonplace, and understands not that beauty in art is created by what Raffaele so well describes, viz., *the idea of beauty in the painter's own mind;* and that in every art, whether its plastic expression be found in words or marble, colors or sounds, the servile imitation of nature is the work of journeymen and tyros; so in conduct the man of the world vitiates and lowers the bold enthusiasm of loftier natures by the perpetual reduction of whatever is generous and trustful to all that is trite and coarse. A great German poet has well defined the distinction between discretion and the larger wisdom. In the last there is a certain rashness which the first disdains:

"The purblind see but the receding shore,
Not that to which the bold wave wafts them o'er."

Yet in this logic of the prudent and the worldly there is often a reasoning unanswerable of its kind.

You must have a feeling, a faith in whatever is self-sacrificing and divine, whether in religion or in art, in glory or in love, or Common-sense will reason you out of the sacrifice, and a syllogism will debase The Divine to an article in the market.

Every true critic in art, from Aristotle and Pliny, from Winkelman and Vasari, to Reynolds and Fuseli, has sought to instruct the painter that Nature is not to be copied, but *exalted;* that the loftiest order of art, selecting only the loftiest combinations, is the perpetual struggle of Humanity to approach the Gods. The great painter, as the great author, embodies what is *possible* to *man*, it is true, but what is not *common* to *mankind.* There is truth in Hamlet: in Macbeth, and his witches; in Desdemona; in Othello; in Prospero; and in Caliban; there is truth in the cartoons of Raffaele; there is truth in the Apollo, the Antinoüs, and the Laocoön. But you do not meet

the originals of the words, the cartoons, or the marble, in Oxford street or St. James's. All these, to return to Raffaele, are the creatures of the idea in the artist's mind. This idea is not inborn ; it has come from an intense study. But that study has been of the ideal that can be raised from the positive and the actual into grandeur and beauty. The commonest model becomes full of exquisite suggestions to him who has formed this idea ; a Venus of flesh and blood would be vulgarized by the imitation of him who has not.

When asked where he got his models, Guido summoned a common porter from his calling, and drew from a mean original a head of surpassing beauty. It resembled the porter, but idealized the porter to the hero. It was true, but it was not real. There are critics who will tell you that the Boor of Teniers is more true to nature than the Porter of Guido! The commonplace public scarcely understand the idealizing principle, even in art. For high art is an acquired taste.

But to come to my comparison. Still less is the kindred principle comprehended in conduct. And the advice of worldly Prudence would as often deter from the risks of Virtue as from the punishments of Vice ; yet in conduct, as in art, there is an idea of the great and beautiful, by which men should exalt the hackneyed and the trite of life. Now, Glyndon felt the sober prudence of Mervale's reasonings ; he recoiled from the probable picture placed before him, in his devotion to the one master talent he possessed, and the one master passion that, rightly directed, might purify his whole being as a strong wind purifies the air.

But though he could not bring himself to decide in the teeth of so rational a judgment, neither could he resolve at once to abandon the pursuit of Viola. Fearful of being influenced by Zanoni's counsels and his own heart, he had for the last two days shunned an interview with the young actress. But after a night following his last conversation with Zanoni, and that we have just recorded with Mervale—a night colored with dreams so distinct as to seem prophetic—dreams that appeared so to shape his future according to the hints of Zanoni, that he could have fancied Zanoni himself had sent them from the house of sleep to haunt his pillow, he resolved once more to seek Viola ; and though without a definite or distinct object, he yielded himself up to the impulse of his heart.

CHAPTER X.

"O sollecito dubbio e fredda tema
Che pensando l'accresci." *
—TASSO, Canzone vi.

SHE was seated outside her door—the young actress! The sea before her in that heavenly bay seemed literally to sleep in the arms of the shore; while, to the right, not far off, rose the dark and tangled crags to which the traveller of to-day is duly brought to gaze on the tomb of Virgil, or compare with the cavern of Posilipo the archway of Highgate Hill. There were a few fishermen loitering by the cliffs, on which their nets were hung to dry; and at a distance, the sound of some rustic pipe (more common at that day than at this) mingled now and then with the bells of the lazy mules, broke the voluptuous silence—the silence of declining noon on the shores of Naples; never, till you have enjoyed it,—never, till you have felt its enervating, but delicious charm, believe that you can comprehend all the meaning of the *Dolce far niente*; † and when that luxury has been known, when you have breathed that atmosphere of faery land, then you will no longer wonder why the heart ripens into fruit so sudden and so rich beneath the rosy skies and the glorious sunshine of the South.

The eyes of the actress were fixed on the broad blue deep beyond. In the unwonted negligence of her dress might be traced the abstraction of her mind. Her beautiful hair was gathered up loosely, and partially bandaged by a kerchief, whose purple color served to deepen the golden hue of tresses. A stray curl escaped and fell down the graceful neck. A loose morning robe, girded by a sash, left the breeze, that came ever and anon from the sea, to die upon the bust half disclosed; and the tiny slipper, that Cinderella might have worn, seemed a world too wide for the tiny foot which it scarcely covered. It might be the heat of the day that deepened the soft bloom of the cheeks, and gave an unwonted languor to the large dark eyes. In all the pomp of her stage attire, in all the flush of excitement before the intoxicating lamps, never had Viola looked so lovely.

By the side of the actress, and filling up the threshold, stood Gionetta, with her arms thrust to the elbow in two huge pockets on either side her gown.

* O anxious doubt and chilling fear, that grows by thinking.

† The pleasure of doing nothing.

"But I assure you," said the nurse, in that sharp, quick, ear-splitting tone in which the old women of the South are more than a match for those of the North; "But I assure you, my darling, that there is not a finer cavalier in all Naples, nor a more beautiful, than this *Inglese;* and I am told that all the *Inglesi* are much richer than they seem. Though they have no trees in their country, poor people! and instead of twenty-four they have only twelve hours to the day, yet I hear that they shoe their horses with *scudi;* and since they cannot (the poor heretics!) turn grapes into wine, for they have no grapes, they turn gold into physic; and take a glass or two of *pistoles* whenever they are troubled with the colic. But you don't hear me, little pupil of my eyes, you don't hear me!"

"And these things are whispered of Zanoni!" said Viola, half to herself, and unheeding Gionetta's eulogies on Glyndon and the English.

"Blessed Maria! do not talk of this terrible Zanoni. You may be sure that his beautiful face, like his yet more beautiful *pistoles*, is only witchcraft. I look at the money he gave me the other night every quarter of an hour, to see whether it has not turned into pebbles."

"Do you then really believe," said Viola, with timid earnestness, "that sorcery still exists?"

"Believe! Do I believe in the blessed San Gennaro? How do you think he cured old Filippo, the fisherman, when the doctor gave him up? How do you think he has managed himself to live at least these three hundred years? How do you think he fascinates every one to his bidding with a look, as the vampires do?"

"Ah, is this only witchcraft? It is like it—it must be!" murmured Viola, turning very pale. Gionetta herself was scarcely more superstitious than the daughter of the musician. And her very innocence, chilled at the strangeness of virgin passion, might well ascribe to magic what hearts more experienced would have resolved to love.

"And, then, why has this great Prince di —— been so terrified by him? Why has he ceased to persecute us? Why has he been so quiet and still? Is there no sorcery in all that?"

"Think you, then," said Viola, with sweet inconsistency, "that I owe that happiness and safety to his protection? Oh, let me so believe! Be silent, Gionetta! Why have I only thee and my own terrors to consult. O beautiful sun!" and the girl pressed her hand to her heart with wild energy, "thou

lightest every spot but this. Go, Gionetta! Leave me alone—leave me!"

"And indeed it is time I should leave you; for the *polenta* will be spoiled, and you have ate nothing all day. If you don't eat, you will lose your beauty, my darling, and then nobody will care for you. Nobody cares for us when we grow ugly; I know that; and then you must, like old Gionetta, get some Viola of your own to spoil. I'll go and see to the *polenta*."

"Since I have known this man," said the girl, half aloud, "since his dark eyes have haunted me, I am no longer the same. I long to escape from myself; to glide with the sunbeam over the hilltops, to become something that is not of earth. Phantoms float before me at night; and a fluttering, like the wing of a bird, within my heart, seems as if the spirit were terrified, and would break its cage."

While murmuring these incoherent rhapsodies, a step that she did not hear approached the actress, and a light hand touched her arm.

"Viola!—*bellissima!* Viola!"

She turned, and saw Glyndon. The sight of his fair young face calmed her at once. His presence gave her pleasure.

"Viola," said the Englishman, taking her hand, and drawing her again to the bench from which she had risen, as he seated himself beside her, "you shall hear me speak! You must know already that I love thee! It has not been pity or admiration alone that has led me ever and ever to thy dear side; reasons there may have been why I have not spoken, save by my eyes, before; but this day—I know not how it is—I feel a more sustained and settled courage to address thee, and learn the happiest or the worst. I have rivals, I know—rivals who are more powerful than the poor artist; are they also more favored!"

Viola blushed faintly, but her countenance was grave and distressed. Looking down, and marking some hieroglyphical figures in the dust with the point of her slipper, she said, with some hesitation, and a vain attempt to be gay: "Signor, whoever wastes his thoughts on an actress must submit to have rivals. It is our unhappy destiny not to be sacred even to ourselves."

"But you do not love this destiny, glittering though it seem; your heart is not in the vocation which your gifts adorn."

"Ah, no!" said the actress, her eyes filling with tears. "Once I loved to be the priestess of song and music; now I feel only that it is a miserable lot to be slave to a multitude."

"Fly, then, with me," said the artist passionately; "quit forever the calling that divides that heart I would have all my own. Share my fate now and forever—my pride, my delight, my ideal! Thou shalt inspire my canvas and my song; thy beauty shall be made at once holy and renowned. In the galleries of princes, crowds shall gather round the effigy of a Venus or a Saint, and a whisper shall break forth, 'It is Viola Pisani!' Ah! Viola, I adore thee: tell me that I do not worship in vain."

"Thou art good and fair," said Viola, gazing on her lover, as he pressed nearer to her, and clasped her hand in his. "But what should I give thee in return?"

"Love—love—only love!"

"A sister's love?"

"Ah, speak not with such cruel coldness!"

"It is all I have for thee. Listen to me, Signor: when I look on your face, when I hear your voice, a certain serene and tranquil calm creeps over and lulls thoughts, oh, how feverish, how wild! When thou art gone the day seems a shade more dark; but the shadow soon flies. I miss thee not; I think not of thee; no, I love thee not; and I will give myself only where I love."

"But I would teach thee to love me: fear it not. Nay, such love as thou describest, in our tranquil climates is the love of innocence and youth."

"Of innocence!" said Viola. "Is it so? Perhaps"—she paused, and added, with an effort: "Foreigner, and wouldst thou wed the orphan? Ah, *thou* at least art generous! It is not the innocence thou wouldst destroy!"

Glyndon drew back, conscience-stricken.

"No, it may not be!" she said, rising, but not conscious of the thoughts, half of shame, half suspicion, that passed through the mind of her lover. "Leave me, and forget me. You do not understand, you could not comprehend, the nature of her whom you think to love. From my childhood upward, I have felt as if I were marked out for some strange and preternatural doom; as if I were singled from my kind. This feeling (and, oh, at times it is one of delirious and vague delight, at others of the darkest gloom) deepens within me day by day. It is like the shadow of twilight, spreading slowly and solemnly around. My hour approaches: a little while and it will be night!"

As she spoke Glyndon listened with visible emotion and perturbation. "Viola," he exclaimed, as she ceased, "your words

more than ever enchain me to you! As you feel, I feel. I, too, have been ever haunted with a chill and unearthly foreboding. Amidst the crowds of men I have felt alone. In all my pleasures, my toils, my pursuits, a warning voice has murmured in my ear: 'Time has a dark mystery in store for thy manhood.' When you spoke it was as the voice of my own soul!"

Viola gazed upon him in wonder and fear. Her countenance was as white as marble: and those features, so divine in their rare symmetry, might have served the Greek with a study for the Pythoness, when, from the mystic cavern and the bubbling spring, she first hears the voice of the inspiring god. Gradually the rigor and tension of that wonderful face relaxed, the color returned, the pulse beat; the heart animated the frame.

"Tell me," she said, turning partially aside; "Tell me, have you seen—do you know—a stranger in this city? One of whom wild stories are afloat?"

"You speak of Zanoni? I have seen him—I know him—and you? Ah, he, too, would be my rival! He, too, would bear thee from me!"

"You err," said Viola hastily, and with a deep sigh; "he pleads for you: he informed me of your love; he besought me not—not to reject it."

"Strange being! Incomprehensible enigma! Why did you name him?"

"Why? Ah, I would have asked whether, when you first saw him, the foreboding, the instinct, of which you spoke, came on you more fearfully, more intelligibly than before; whether you felt at once repelled from him, yet attracted towards him; whether you felt (and the actress spoke with hurried animation) that with HIM was connected the secret of your life?"

"All this I felt," answered Glyndon, in a trembling voice, "the first time I was in his presence. Though all around me was gay—music, amidst lamp-lit trees, light converse near, and heaven without a cloud above—my knees knocked together, my hair bristled, and my blood curdled like ice. Since then he has divided my thoughts with thee."

"No more, no more!" said Viola, in a stifled tone; "there must be the hand of fate in this. I can speak to you no more now. Farewell!" She sprung past him into the house, and closed the door. Glyndon did not follow her, nor, strange as it may seem, was he so inclined. The thought and recollection of that moonlit hour in the gardens, of the strange address of Zanoni, froze up all human passion. Viola herself, if

not forgotten, shrunk back like a shadow into the recesses of his breast. He shivered as he stepped into the sunlight, and musingly retraced his steps into the more populous parts of that liveliest of Italian cities.

BOOK III.—THEURGIA.

"I cavalier sen vanno
Dove il pino fatal gli attende in porto." *
—*Gerus. Lib.*, cant. xv. (*Argomento.*)

CHAPTER I.

"But that which especially distinguishes the brotherhood is their marvellous knowledge of all the resources of medical art. They work not by charms, but simples."—*MS. Account of the Origin and Attributes of the True Rosicrucians, by J. Von D——.*

At this time it chanced that Viola had the opportunity to return the kindness shown to her by the friendly musician, whose house had received and sheltered her when first left an orphan on the world. Old Bernardi had brought up three sons to the same profession as himself, and they had lately left Naples to seek their fortunes in the wealthier cities of northern Europe, where the musical market was less overstocked. There was only left to glad the household of his aged wife and himself, a lively, prattling, dark-eyed girl, of some eight years old, the child of his second son, whose mother had died in giving her birth. It so happened that, about a month previous to the date on which our story has now entered, a paralytic affection had disabled Bernardi from the duties of his calling. He had been always a social, harmless, improvident, generous fellow, living on his gains from day to day, as if the day of sickness and old age never was to arrive. Though he received a small allowance for his past services, it ill-sufficed for his wants; neither was he free from debt. Poverty stood at his hearth, when Viola's grateful smile and liberal hand came to chase the grim fiend away. But it is not enough to a heart truly kind to send and give; more charitable is it to visit and console. "Forget not thy father's friend." So almost daily went the bright idol of Naples to the house of Bernardi. Suddenly a heavier affliction than either poverty or the palsy befell the old musician. His grandchild, his little Beatrice, fell ill, suddenly and dangerously

* The knights came where the fatal bark awaited them in the Port.

ill, of one of those rapid fevers common to the South ; and Viola was summoned from her strange and fearful reveries of love or fancy, to the sick-bed of the young sufferer.

The child was exceedingly fond of Viola, and the old people thought that her mere presence would bring healing ; but when Viola arrived, Beatrice was insensible. Fortunately, there was no performance that evening at San Carlo, and she resolved to stay the night, and partake its fearful cares and dangerous vigil.

But during the night the child grew worse ; the physician (the leechcraft has never been very skilful at Naples) shook his powdered head, kept his aromatics at his nostrils, administered his palliatives, and departed. Old Bernardi seated himself by the bedside in stern silence : here was the last tie that bound him to life. Well, let the anchor break, and the battered ship go down ! It was an iron resolve, more fearful than sorrow. An old man with one foot in the grave watching by the couch of a dying child is one of the most awful spectacles in human calamities. The wife was more active, more bustling, more hopeful, and more tearful. Viola took heed of all three. But towards dawn Beatrice's state became so obviously alarming, that Viola herself began to despair. At this time she saw the old woman suddenly rise from before the image of the saint at which she had been kneeling, wrap herself in her cloak and hood, and quietly quit the chamber. Viola stole after her.

"It is cold for thee, good mother, to brave the air ; let me go for the physician !"

"Child, I am not going to him. I have heard of one in the city who has been tender to the poor, and who, they say, has cured the sick when physicians failed. I will go and say to him : 'Signor, we are beggars in all else, but yesterday we were rich in love. We are at the close of life, but we lived in our grandchild's childhood. Give us back our wealth, give us back our youth. Let us die blessing God that the thing we love survives us.'"

She was gone. Why did thy heart beat, Viola? The infant's sharp cry of pain called her back to the couch ; and there still sate the old man, unconscious of his wife's movements, not stirring, his eyes glazing fast as they watched the agonies of that slight frame. By degrees the wail of pain died into a low moan, the convulsions grew feebler, but more frequent, the glow of fever faded into the blue, pale tinge that settles into the last bloodless marble.

The daylight came broader and clearer through the casement—steps were heard on the stairs—the old woman entered

hastily: she rushed to the bed, cast a glance on the patient: "She lives yet, Signor—she lives!"

Viola raised her eyes—the child's head was pillowed on her bosom—and she beheld Zanoni. He smiled on her with a tender and soft approval, and took the infant from her arms. Yet even then, as she saw him bending silently over that pale face, a superstitious fear mingled with her hopes. "Was it by lawful—by holy art that—" Her self-questioning ceased abruptly; for his dark eye turned to her as if he read her soul: and his aspect accused her conscience for its suspicion, for it spoke reproach not unmingled with disdain.

"Be comforted," he said, gently turning to the old man; "the danger is not beyond the reach of human skill"; and taking from his bosom a small crystal vase, he mingled a few drops with water. No sooner did this medicine moisten the infant's lips than it seemed to produce an astonishing effect. The color revived rapidly on the lips and cheeks; in a few moments the sufferer slept calmly, and with the regular breathing of painless sleep. And then the old man rose, rigidly, as a corpse might rise—looked down, listened, and creeping gently away, stole to the corner of the room, and wept, and thanked Heaven!

Now, old Bernardi had been hitherto but a cold believer; sorrow had never before led him aloft from earth. Old as he was, he had never before thought as the old should think of death; that endangered life of the young had wakened up the careless soul of age. Zanoni whispered to the wife, and she drew the old man quietly from the room.

"Dost thou fear to leave me an hour with thy charge, Viola? Thinkest thou still that this knowledge is of a Fiend?"

"Ah," said Viola, humbled and yet rejoiced, "forgive me, forgive me, Signor. Thou biddest the young live and the old pray. My thoughts never shall wrong thee more!"

Before the sun rose Beatrice was out of danger; at noon Zanoni escaped from the blessings of the aged pair, and as he closed the door of the house he found Viola awaiting him without.

She stood before him timidly, her hands crossed meekly on her bosom, her downcast eyes swimming with tears.

"Do not let me be the only one you leave unhappy!"

"And what cure can the herbs and anodynes effect for thee? If thou canst so readily believe ill of those who have aided and yet would serve thee, thy disease is of the heart; and—nay, weep not! Nurse of the sick, and comforter of the sad, I

should rather approve than chide thee. Forgive thee. Life, that ever needs forgiveness, has, for its first duty, to forgive."

"No, do not forgive me yet. I do not deserve a pardon; for even now, while I feel how ungrateful I was to believe, suspect, aught injurious and false to my preserver, my tears flow from happiness, not remorse. Oh!" she continued with a simple fervor, unconscious, in her innocence and generous emotions, of all the secrets she betrayed; "thou knowest not how bitter it was to believe thee not more good, more pure, more sacred than all the world. And when I saw thee, the wealthy, the noble, coming from thy palace to minister to the sufferings of the hovel, when I heard those blessings of the poor breathed upon thy parting footsteps, I felt my very self exalted—good in thy goodness—noble at least in those thoughts that did *not* wrong thee."

"And thinkest thou, Viola, that in a mere act of science there is so much virtue? The commonest leech will tend the sick for his fee. Are prayers and blessings a less reward than gold?"

"And mine, then, are not worthless? Thou wilt accept of mine?"

"Ah, Viola!" exclaimed Zanoni with a sudden passion, that covered her face with blushes, "thou only, methinks, on all the earth, hast the power to wound or to delight me!" He checked himself, and his face became grave and sad. "And this," he added in altered tone, "because if thou wouldst heed my counsels, methinks I could guide a guileless heart to a happy fate."

"Thy counsels! I will obey them all. Mould me to what thou wilt. In thine absence, I am as a child that fears every shadow in the dark; in thy presence, my soul expands, and the whole world seems calm with a celestial noonday. Do not deny to me that presence. I am fatherless, and ignorant, and alone!"

Zanoni averted his face, and after a moment's silence, replied calmly:

"Be it so. Sister, I will visit thee again!"

CHAPTER II.

"Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."—SHAKSPEARE.

WHO so happy as Viola now! A dark load was lifted from her heart; her step seemed to tread on air; she would have sung for very delight as she went gayly home. It is such happiness to the pure to love, but oh, such more than happiness to believe in the worth of the One beloved. Between them there

might be human obstacles: wealth, rank, man's little world. But there was no longer that dark gulf which the imagination recoils to dwell on, and which separates forever soul from soul. He did not love her in return. Love her! But did she ask for love? Did she herself love? No; or she would never have been at once so humble and so bold. How merrily the ocean murmured in her ear; how radiant an aspect the commonest passer-by seemed to wear! She gained her home, she looked upon the tree, glancing, with fantastic branches, in the sun. "Yes, brother mine!" she said, laughing in her joy, "like thee, I *have* struggled to the light!"

She had never hitherto, like the more instructed Daughters of the North, accustomed herself to that delicious Confessional, the transfusion of thought to writing. Now, suddenly, her heart felt an impulse; a newborn instinct, that bade it commune with itself, bade it disentangle its web of golden fancies, made her wish to look upon her inmost self as in a glass. Upsprung from the embrace of Love and Soul—the Eros and the Psyche—their beautiful offspring, Genius! She blushed, she sighed, she trembled as she wrote. And from the fresh World that she had built for herself, she was awakened to prepare for the glittering stage. How dull became the music, how dim the scene, so exquisite and so bright of old! Stage, thou art the Fairy Land to the vision of the worldly. Fancy, whose music is not heard by men, whose scenes shift not by mortal hand, as the Stage to the present world, art thou to the Future and the Past!

CHAPTER III.

"In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes."—SHAKSPEARE.

THE next day, at noon, Zanoni visited Viola; and the next day, and the next, and again the next—days, that to her seemed like a special time set apart from the rest of life. And yet he never spoke to her in the language of flattery, and almost of adoration, to which she had been accustomed. Perhaps his very coldness, so gentle as it was, assisted to this mysterious charm. He talked to her much of her past life, and she was scarcely surprised (she now never thought of *terror*) to perceive how much of that past seemed known to him.

He made her speak to him of her father; he made her recall some of the airs of Pisani's wild music. And those airs seemed to charm and lull him into revery.

"As music was to the musician," said he, "may science be to the wise. Your father looked abroad in the world; all was discord to the fine sympathies that he felt with the harmonies that daily and nightly float to the throne of Heaven. Life, with its noisy ambition and its mean passions, is so poor and base! Out of his soul he created the life and the world for which his soul was fitted. Viola, thou art the daughter of that life, and wilt be the denizen of that world."

In his earlier visits, he did not speak of Glyndon. The day soon came on which he renewed the subject. And so trustful, obedient, and entire was the allegiance that Viola now owned to his dominion, that, unwelcome as that subject was, she restrained her heart, and listened to him in silence!

At last he said: "Thou hast promised thou wilt obey my counsels, and if, Viola, I should ask thee, nay, adjure, to accept this stranger's hand, and share his fate, should he offer to thee such a lot—wouldst thou refuse?"

And then she pressed back the tears that gushed to her eyes, and with a strange pleasure in the midst of pain—the pleasure of one who sacrifices heart itself to the one who commands that heart—she answered falteringly: "If thou *canst* ordain it—why—"

"Speak on."

"Dispose of me as thou wilt."

Zanoni stood in silence for some moments; he saw the struggle which the girl thought she concealed so well; he made an involuntary movement towards her, and pressed her hand to his lips; it was the first time he had ever departed even so far from a certain austerity, which perhaps made her fear him and her own thoughts the less.

"Viola," said he, and his voice trembled, "the danger that I can avert no more, if thou linger still in Naples, comes hourly near and near to thee! On the third day from this, thy fate must be decided. I accept thy promise. Before the last hour of that day, come what may, I shall see thee again, *here*, at thine own house. Till then, farewell!"

CHAPTER IV

"Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn."—BYRON.

WHEN Glyndon left Viola, as recorded in the concluding chapter of the second division of this work, he was absorbed

again in those mystical desires and conjectures, which the haunting recollection of Zanoni always served to create. And as he wandered through the streets he was scarcely conscious of his own movements till, in the mechanism of custom, he found himself in the midst of one of the noble collections of pictures which form the boast of those Italian cities whose glory is in the past. Thither he had been wont, almost daily, to repair, for the gallery contained some of the finest specimens of a master especially the object of his enthusiasm and study. There, before the works of Salvator, he had often paused in deep and earnest reverence. The striking characteristic of that artist is the *Vigor of Will;* void of the elevated idea of abstract beauty, which furnishes a model and archetype to the genius of more illustrious order, the singular energy of the man hews out of the rock a dignity of his own. His images have the majesty, not of the god, but the savage; utterly free, like the sublimer schools, from the commonplace of imitation—apart, with them, from the conventional littleness of the Real—he grasps the imagination and compels it to follow him, not to the heaven, but through all that is most wild and fantastic upon earth ; a sorcery, not of the starry magian, but of the gloomy wizard : a man of romance, whose heart beat strongly, griping art with a hand of iron, and forcing it to idealize the scenes of his actual life. Before this powerful Will, Glyndon drew back more awed and admiring than before the calmer beauty which rose from the soul of Raffaele, like Venus from the deep. And now, as awaking from his revery, he stood opposite to that wild and magnificent gloom of Nature which frowned on him from the canvas, the very leaves on those gnomelike, distorted trees seemed to rustle sibylline secrets in his ear. Those rugged and sombre Apennines, the cataract that dashed between, suited, more than the actual scenes would have done, the mood and temper of his mind. The stern, uncouth forms at rest on the crags below, and dwarfed by the giant size of the Matter that reigned around them, impressed him with the might of Nature and the littleness of Man. As in genius of the more spiritual cast, the living man, and the soul that lives in him, are studiously made the prominent image ; and the mere accessories of scene kept down, and cast back, as if to show that the exile from paradise is yet the monarch of the outward world, so in the landscapes of Salvator, the tree, the mountain, the waterfall, become the principal, and man himself dwindles to an accessory. The Matter seems to reign supreme, and its true lord to creep be-

neath its stupendous shadow. Inert matter giving interest to the immortal man, not the immortal man to the inert matter. A terrible philosophy in art!

While something of these thoughts passed through the mind of the painter, he felt his arm touched, and saw Nicot by his side.

"A great master," said Nicot, "but I do not love the school."

"I do not love, but I am awed by it. We love the beautiful and serene, but we have a feeling as deep as love for the terrible and dark."

"True," said Nicot thoughtfully. "And yet that feeling is only a superstition. The nursery, with its tales of ghosts and goblins, is the cradle of many of our impressions in the world. But art should not seek to pander to our ignorance; art should represent only truths. I confess that Raffaele pleases me less, because I have no sympathy with his subjects. His saints and virgins are to me only men and women."

"And from what source should painting then take its themes?"

"From history, without doubt," returned Nicot pragmatically; "those great Roman actions which inspire men with sentiments of liberty and valor, with the virtues of a republic. I wish the cartoons of Raffaele had illustrated the story of the Horatii; but it remains for France and her Republic to give to posterity the new and the true school, which could never have arisen in a country of priestcraft and delusion."

"And the saints and virgins of Raffaele are to you only men and women?" repeated Glyndon, going back to Nicot's candid confession in amaze, and scarcely hearing the deductions the Frenchman drew from his proposition.

"Assuredly. Ha, ha!" and Nicot laughed hideously. "Do you ask me to believe in the calendar, or what?"

"But the ideal?"

"The ideal!" interrupted Nicot. "Stuff! The Italian critics, and your English Reynolds, have turned your head. They are so fond of their '*gusto grande*,' and their 'ideal beauty that speaks to the soul!' Soul! Is there a soul? I understand a man when he talks of composing for a refined taste, for an educated and intelligent reason, for a sense that comprehends truths. But as for the soul—bah! We are but modifications of matter, and painting is modification of matter also."

Glyndon turned his eyes from the picture before him to Nicot, and from Nicot to the picture. The dogmatist gave a

voice to the thoughts which the sight of the picture had awakened. He shook his head without reply.

"Tell me," said Nicot abruptly, "that impostor—Zanoni? Oh! I have now learned his name and quackeries, forsooth! What did he say to thee of me?"

"Of thee? Nothing; but to warn me against thy doctrines."

"Aha! Was that all?" said Nicot. "He is a notable inventor, and since, when we met last, I unmasked his delusions, I thought he might retaliate by some tale of slander."

"Unmasked his delusions! How?"

"A dull and long story: he wished to teach an old doting friend of mine his secrets of prolonged life and philosophical alchemy. I advise thee to renounce so discreditable an acquaintance." With that Nicot nodded significantly, and, not wishing to be further questioned, went his way.

Glyndon's mind at that moment had escaped to his art, and the comments and presence of Nicot had been no welcome interruption. He turned from the landscape of Salvator, and his eye falling on a Nativity by Correggio, the contrast between the two ranks of genius struck him as a discovery. That exquisite repose; that perfect sense of beauty; that strength without effort; that breathing moral of high art, which speaks to the mind through the eye, and raises the thoughts, by the aid of tenderness and love, to the regions of awe and wonder,—ay, *that* was the true school! He quitted the gallery with reluctant steps and inspired ideas; he sought his own home. Here, pleased not to find the sober Mervale, he leant his face on his hands, and endeavored to recall the words of Zanoni in their last meeting. Yes, he felt Nicot's talk even on art was crime; it debased the imagination itself to mechanism. Could he, who saw nothing in the soul but a combination of matter, prate of schools that should excel a Raffaele? Yes, art was magic; and as he owned the truth of the aphorism, he could comprehend that in magic there may be religion, for religion is an essential to art. His old ambition, freeing itself from the frigid prudence with which Mervale sought to desecrate all images less substantial than the golden calf of the world, revived, and stirred, and kindled. The subtle detection of what he conceived to be an error in the school he had hitherto adopted, made more manifest to him by the grinning commentary of Nicot, seemed to open to him a new world of invention. He seized the happy moment; he placed before him the colors and the canvas. Lost in his conceptions of a fresh

ideal, his mind was lifted aloft into the airy realms of beauty; dark thoughts, unhallowed desires, vanished. Zanoni was right: the material world shrunk from his gaze: he viewed nature as from a mountain-top afar; and as the waves of his unquiet heart become calm and still, again the angel eyes of Viola beamed on them as a holy star.

Locking himself in his chamber, he refused even the visits of Mervale. Intoxicated with the pure air of his fresh existence, he remained for three days, and almost nights, absorbed in his employment; but on the fourth morning came that reaction to which all labor is exposed. He woke listless and fatigued; and as he cast his eyes on the canvas the glory seemed to have gone from it. Humiliating recollections of the great masters he aspired to rival forced themselves upon him; defects before unseen magnified themselves to deformities in his languid and discontented eyes. He touched and retouched, but his hand failed him; he threw down his instruments in despair; he opened his casement; the day without was bright and lovely; the street was crowded with that life which is ever so joyous and affluent in the animated population of Naples. He saw the lover, as he passed, conversing with his mistress by those mute gestures which have survived all changes of languages, the same now as when the Etruscan painted yon vases in the Museo Borbonico. Light from without beckoned his youth to its mirth and its pleasures; and the dull walls within, lately large enough to comprise heaven and earth, seemed now cabined and confined as a felon's prison. He welcomed the step of Mervale at his threshold, and unbarred the door.

"And is that all you have done?" said Mervale, glancing disdainfully at the canvas. "Is it for this that you have shut yourself out from the sunny days and moonlit nights of Naples?"

"While the fit was on me, I basked in a brighter sun, and imbibed the voluptuous luxury of a softer moon."

"You own that the fit is over. Well, that is some sign of returning sense. After all it is better to daub canvas for three days than make a fool of yourself for life. This little siren?"

"Be dumb! I hate to hear you name her."

Mervale drew his chair nearer to Glyndon's, thrust his hands deep in his breeches pockets, stretched his legs, and was about to begin a serious strain of expostulation, when a knock was heard at the door, and Nicot, without waiting for leave, obtruded his ugly head.

"Good-day, *mon cher confrère*. I wished to speak to you.

Hein! You have been at work, I see. This is well—very well! A bold outline; great freedom in that right hand. But, hold! Is the composition good? You have not got the great pyramidal form. Don't you think, too, that you have lost the advantage of contrast in this figure; since the right leg is put forward, surely the right arm should be put back? Peste, but that little finger is very fine!"

Mervale detested Nicot. For all speculators, Utopians, alterers of the world, and wanderers from the high-road, were equally hateful to him; but he could have hugged the Frenchman at that moment. He saw in Glyndon's expressive countenance all the weariness and disgust he endured. After so wrapt a study, to be prated to about pyramidal forms, and right arms, and right legs—the accidence of the art—the whole conception to be overlooked, and the criticism to end in approval of the little finger!

"Oh," said Glyndon, peevishly throwing the cloth over his design, "enough of my poor performance! What is it you have to say to me?"

"In the first place," said Nicot, huddling himself together upon a stool; "In the first place, this Signor Zanoni—this second Cagliostro—who disputes my doctrines! (no doubt—a spy of the man Capet)—I am not vindictive; as Helvetius says, 'Our errors arise from our passions.' I keep mine in order; but it is virtuous to hate in the cause of mankind; I would I had the denouncing and the judging of Signor Zanoni at Paris." And Nicot's small eyes shot fire, and he gnashed his teeth.

"Have you any new cause to hate him?"

"Yes," said Nicot fiercely. "Yes, I hear he is courting the girl I mean to marry."

"You! Whom do you speak of?"

"The celebrated Pisani! She is divinely handsome. She would make my fortune in a republic. And a republic we shall have before the year is out!"

Mervale rubbed his hands, and chuckled. Glyndon colored with rage and shame.

"Do you know the Signora Pisani? Have you ever spoken to her?"

"Not yet. But when I make up my mind to anything, it is soon done. I am about to return to Paris. They write me word that a handsome wife advances the career of a patriot. The age of prejudice is over. The sublimer virtues begin to be understood. I shall take back the handsomest wife in Europe."

"Be quiet! What are you about?" said Mervale, seizing Glyndon, as he saw him advance towards the Frenchman, his eyes sparkling, and his hands clenched.

"Sir," said Glyndon, between his teeth, "you know not of whom you thus speak! Do you affect to suppose that Viola Pisani would accept *you?*"

"Not if she could get a better offer," said Mervale, looking up to the ceiling.

"A better offer? You don't understand me," said Nicot. "I, Jean Nicot, propose to marry the girl—marry her! Others may make her more liberal offers, but no one, I apprehend, would make one so honorable. I alone have pity on her friendless situation. Besides, according to the dawning state of things, one will always, in France, be able to get rid of a wife whenever one wishes. We shall have new laws of divorce. Do you imagine that an Italian girl—and in no country in the world are maidens, it seems, more chaste (though wives may console themselves with virtues more philosophical)—would refuse the hand of an artist for the settlements of a prince? No; I think better of the Pisani than you do. I shall hasten to introduce myself to her."

"I wish you all success, Monsieur Nicot," said Mervale, rising, and shaking him heartily by the hand.

Glyndon cast at them both a disdainful glance.

"Perhaps, Monsieur Nicot," said he, at length constraining his lips into a bitter smile; "Perhaps you may have rivals."

"So much the better," replied Monsieur Nicot carelessly, kicking his heels together, and appearing absorbed in admiration at the size of his large feet.

"I myself admire Viola Pisani."

"Every painter must!"

"I may offer her marriage as well as yourself."

"That would be folly in you, though wisdom in me. You would not know how to draw profit from the speculation! *Cher confrère*, you have prejudices."

"You do not dare to say you would make profit from your own wife?"

"The virtuous Cato lent his wife to a friend. I love virtue, and I cannot do better than imitate Cato. But to be serious: I do not fear you as a rival. You are good-looking, and I am ugly. But you are irresolute, and I decisive. While you are uttering fine phrases, I shall say, simply, 'I have a *bon état*. Will you marry me?' So do your worst, *cher confrère*. *Au revoir*, behind the scenes!"

So saying, Nicot rose, stretched his long arms and short legs, yawned till he showed all his ragged teeth from ear to ear, pressed down his cap on his shaggy head with an air of defiance, and casting over his left shoulder a glance of triumph and malice at the indignant Glyndon, sauntered out of the room.

Mervale burst into a violent fit of laughter. "See how your Viola is estimated by your friend. A fine victory to carry her off from the ugliest dog between Lapland and the Calmucks."

Glyndon was yet too indignant to answer, when a new visitor arrived. It was Zanoni himself. Mervale, on whom the appearance and aspect of this personage imposed a kind of reluctant deference, which he was unwilling to acknowledge, and still more to betray, nodded to Glyndon, and saying simply, "More when I see you again," left the painter and his unexpected visitor.

"I see," said Zanoni, lifting the cloth from the canvas, "that you have not slighted the advice I gave you. Courage, young artist, this is an escape from the schools; this is full of the bold self-confidence of real genius. You had no Nicot, no Mervale at your elbow when this image of true beauty was conceived!"

Charmed back to his art by this unlooked-for praise, Glyndon replied modestly: "I thought well of my design till this morning; and then I was disenchanted of my happy persuasion."

"Say, rather, that, unaccustomed to continuous labor, you were fatigued with your enployment."

"That is true. Shall I confess it? I began to miss the world without. It seemed to me as if, while I lavished my heart and my youth upon visions of beauty, I was losing the beautiful realities of actual life. And I envied the merry fisherman, singing as he passed below my casement, and the lover conversing with his mistress."

"And," said Zanoni, with an encouraging smile, "do you blame yourself for the natural and necessary return to earth, in which even the most habitual visitor of the Heavens of Invention seeks his relaxation and repose. Man's genius is a bird that cannot be always on the wing; when the craving for the actual world is felt, it is a hunger that must be appeased. They who command best the ideal, enjoy ever most the real. See the true artist, when abroad in men's thoroughfares, ever observant, ever diving into the heart, ever alive to the least as to the greatest of the complicated truths of existence; descend-

ing to what pedants would call the trivial and the frivolous. From every mesh in the social web he can disentangle a grace. And for him each airy gossamer floats in the gold of the sunlight. Know you not that around the animalcule that sports in the water there shines a halo, as around the star* that revolves in bright pastime through the space? True art finds beauty everywhere. In the street, in the market-place, in the hovel, it gathers food for the hive of its thoughts. In the mire of politics, Dante and Milton selected pearls for the wreath of song. Who ever told you that Raffaele did not enjoy the life without, carrying everywhere with him the one inward idea of beauty which attracted and embedded in its own amber every straw that the feet of the dull man trampled into mud? As some lord of the forest wanders abroad for its prey, and scents and follows it over plain and hill, through brake and jungle, but, seizing it at last, bears the quarry to its unwitnessed cave, so Genius searches through wood and waste untiringly and eagerly, every sense awake, every nerve strained to speed and strength, for the scattered and flying images of matter, that it seizes at last with its mighty talons, and bears away with it into solitudes no footstep can invade. Go, seek the world without; it is for art the inexhaustible pasture ground and harvest to the world within!"

"You comfort me," said Glyndon, brightening. "I had imagined my weariness a proof of my deficiency! But not now would I speak to you of these labors. Pardon me if I pass from the toil to the reward. You have uttered dim prophecies of my future, if I wed one who, in the judgment of the sober world, would only darken its prospects and obstruct its ambition. Do you speak from the wisdom which is experience, or that which aspires to prediction?"

"Are they not allied? Is it not he best accustomed to calculation who can solve at a glance any new problem in the arithmetic of chances?"

"You evade my question."

"No; but I will adapt my answer the better to your comprehension, for it is upon this very point that I have sought you. Listen to me!" Zanoni fixed his eyes earnestly on his listener, and continued: "For the accomplishment of whatever is great and lofty, the clear perception of truths is the first requisite—truths adapted to the object desired. The warrior thus reduces the chances of battle to combinations

* The monas mica, found in the purest pools, is encompassed with a halo. And this is frequent amongst many other species of animalculæ.

almost of mathematics. He can predict a result, if he can but depend upon the materials he is forced to employ. At such a loss, he can cross that bridge; in such a time, he can reduce that fort. Still more accurately, for he depends less on material causes than ideas at his command, can the commander of the purer science or diviner art, if he once perceive the truths that are in him and around, foretell what he can achieve, and in what he is condemned to fail. But this perception of truths is disturbed by many causes: vanity, passion, fear, indolence in himself, ignorance of the fitting means without to accomplish what he designs. He may miscalculate his own forces; he may have no chart of the country he would invade. It is only in a peculiar state of the mind that it is capable of perceiving truth; and that state is profound serenity. Your mind is fevered by a desire for truth: you would compel it to your embraces; you would ask me to impart to you, without ordeal or preparation, the grandest secrets that exist in nature. But truth can no more be seen by the mind unprepared for it, than the sun can dawn upon the midst of night. Such a mind receives truth only to pollute it; to use the simile of one who has wandered near to the secret of the sublime Goetia (or the magic that lies within nature, as electricity within the cloud): 'He who pours water into the muddy well, does but disturb the mud.*

"What do you tend to?"

"This: that you have faculties that may attain to surpassing power: that may rank you among those enchanters who, greater than the magian, leave behind them an enduring influence, worshipped wherever beauty is comprehended, wherever the soul is sensible of a higher world than that in which matter struggles for crude and incomplete existence.

"But to make available those faculties, need I be a prophet to tell you that you must learn to concentre upon great objects all your desires. The heart must rest, that the mind may be active. At present, you wander from aim to aim. As the ballast to the ship, so to the spirit are Faith and Love. With your whole heart, affections, humanity, centered in one object, your mind and aspirations will become equally steadfast and in earnest. Viola is a child as yet: you do not perceive the high nature the trials of life will develop. Pardon me, if I say that her soul, purer and loftier than your own, will bear it upward, as a sacred hymn carries aloft the spirits of the world. Your nature wants the harmony, the music which, as the Pytha-

* Iamb. de Vit. Pythag.

goreans wisely taught, at once elevates and soothes. I offer you that music in her love."

"But am I sure that she does love me?"

"Artist, no; she loves you not at present; her affections are full of another. But if I could transfer to you, as the loadstone transfers its attraction to the magnet, the love that she has now for me; if I could cause her to see in you the ideal of her dreams—"

"Is such a gift in the power of man?"

"I offer it to you, if your love be lawful, if your faith in virtue and yourself be deep and loyal; if not, think you that I would disenchant her with truth to make her adore a falsehood?"

"But if," persisted Glyndon, "if she be all that you tell me, and if she love you, how can you rob yourself of so priceless a treasure?"

"Oh, shallow and mean heart of man!" exclaimed Zanoni, with unaccustomed passion and vehemence, "dost thou conceive so little of love as not to know that it sacrifices all—love itself—for the happiness of the thing it loves? Hear me!" And Zanoni's face grew pale. "Hear me! I press this upon you, because I love her, and because I fear that with me her fate will be less fair than with yourself. Why—ask not, for I will not tell you. Enough! Time presses now for your answer; it cannot long be delayed. Before the night of the third day from this, all choice will be forbid you!"

"But," said Glyndon, still doubting and suspicious; "But why this haste?"

"Man, you are not worthy of her when you ask me. All I can tell you here, you should have known yourself. This ravisher, this man of will, this son of the old Visconti, unlike you—steadfast, resolute, earnest even in his crimes—never relinquishes an object. But one passion controls his lust; it is his avarice. The day after his attempt on Viola, his uncle, the Cardinal ——, from whom he has large expectations of land and gold, sent for him, and forbade him, on pain of forfeiting all the possessions which his schemes already had parcelled out, to pursue with dishonorable designs one whom the Cardinal had heeded and loved from childhood. This is the cause of his present pause from his pursuit. While we speak, the cause expires. Before the hand of the clock reaches the hour of noon, the Cardinal —— will be no more. At this very moment thy friend, Jean Nicot, is with the Prince di ——."

"He! Wherefore?"

"To ask what dower shall go with Viola Pisani, the morning that she leaves the palace of the Prince."

"And how do you know all this?"

"Fool! I tell thee again, because a lover is a watcher by night and day; because love never sleeps when danger menaces the beloved one!"

"And you it was that informed the Cardinal ——?"

"Yes; and what has been my task might as easily have been thine. Speak—thine answer!"

"You shall have it on the third day from this."

"Be it so. Put off, poor waverer, thy happiness to the last hour. On the third day from this, I will ask thee thy resolve."

"And where shall we meet?"

"Before midnight, where you may least expect me. You cannot shun me, though you may seek to do so!"

"Stay one moment! You condemn me as doubtful, irresolute, suspicious. Have I no cause? Can I yield without a struggle to the strange fascination you exert upon my mind? What interest can you have in me, a stranger, that you should thus dictate to me the gravest action in the life of man? Do you suppose that any one in his senses would not pause, and deliberate, and ask himself, 'Why should this stranger care thus for me'?"

"And yet," said Zanoni, "if I told thee that I could initiate thee into the secrets of that magic which the philosophy of the whole existing world treats as a chimera, or imposture; if I promised to show thee how to command the beings of air and ocean; how to accumulate wealth more easily than a child can gather pebbles on the shore; to place in thy hands the essence of the herbs which prolong life from age to age; the mystery of that attraction by which to awe all danger, and disarm all violence, and subdue man as the serpent charms the bird; if I told thee that all these it was mine to possess and to communicate, thou wouldst listen to me then, and obey me without a doubt!"

"It is true; and I can account for this only by the imperfect associations of my childhood; by traditions in our house of—"

"Your forefather, who, in the revival of science, sought the secrets of Apollonius and Paracelsus."

"What!" said Glyndon, amazed. "Are you so well acquainted with the annals of an obscure lineage?"

"To the man who aspires to know, no man who has been the meanest student of knowledge should be unknown. You

ask me why I have shown this interest in your fate? There is one reason which I have not yet told you. There is a Fraternity as to whose laws and whose mysteries the most inquisitive schoolmen are in the dark. By those laws, all are pledged to warn, to aid, and to guide even the remotest descendants of men who have toiled, though vainly, like your ancestor, in the mysteries of the Order. We are bound to advise them to their welfare; nay, more, if they command us to it, we must accept them as our pupils. I am a survivor of that most ancient and immemorial union. This it was that bound me to thee at the first; this, perhaps, attracted thyself unconsciously, Son of our Brotherhood, to me."

"If this be so, I command thee, in the name of the laws thou obeyest, to receive me as thy pupil!"

"What do you ask?" said Zanoni passionately. "Learn first the conditions. No neophyte must have, at his initiation, one affection or desire that chains him to the world. He must be pure from the love of woman, free from avarice and ambition, free from the dreams even of art, or the hope of earthly fame. The first sacrifice thou must make is—Viola herself. And for what? For an ordeal that the most daring courage only can encounter, the most ethereal natures alone survive! Thou art unfit for the science that has made me and others what we are or have been; for thy whole nature is one fear!"

"Fear!" cried Glyndon, coloring with resentment, and rising to the full height of his stature.

"Fear! And the worst fear—fear of the world's opinion; fear of the Nicots and the Mervales; fear of thine own impulses when most generous; fear of thine own powers when thy genius is most bold; fear that virtue is not eternal; fear that God does not live in Heaven to keep watch on earth; fear, the fear of little men; and that fear is never known to the great."

With these words Zanoni abruptly left the artist—humbled, bewildered, and not convinced. He remained alone with his thoughts, till he was aroused by the striking of the clock; he then suddenly remembered Zanoni's prediction of the Cardinal's death; and, seized with an intense desire to learn its truth, he hurried into the streets, he gained the Cardinal's palace. Five minutes before noon his Eminence had expired, after an illness of less than an hour. Zanoni's visit had occupied more time than the illness of the Cardinal. Awed and perplexed, he turned from the palace, and as he walked through the Chiaja, he saw Jean Nicot emerge from the portals of the Prince di ——.

CHAPTER V.

"Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still."
—SHAKSPEARE.

VENERABLE Brotherhood, so sacred and so little known, from whose secret and precious archives the materials for this history have been drawn; ye who have retained, from century to century, all that time has spared of the august and venerable science,—thanks to you, if now for the first time some record of the thoughts and actions of no false and self-styled luminary of your Order be given, however imperfectly, to the world. Many have called themselves of your band; many spurious pretenders have been so called by the learned ignorance which, still baffled and perplexed, is driven to confess that it knows nothing of your origin, your ceremonies or doctrines, nor even if you still have local habitation on the earth. Thanks to you if I, the only one of my country, in this age, admitted, with a profane footstep, into your mysterious Academe,* have been by you empowered and instructed to adapt to the comprehension of the uninitiated some few of the starry truths which shone on the great Shemaía of the Chaldean Lore, and gleamed dimly through the darkened knowledge of later disciples, laboring, like Psellus and Iamblichus, to revive the embers of the fire which burned in the *Hamarin* of the East. Though not to us of an aged and hoary world, is vouchsafed the NAME which, so say the earliest oracles of the earth, "rushes into the infinite worlds," yet is it ours to trace the reviving truths, through each new discovery of the philosopher and chemist. The laws of Attraction, of Electricity, and of the yet more mysterious agency of that Great Principle of Life, which, if drawn from the Universe, would leave the Universe a Grave, were but the code in which the Theurgy of old sought the guides that led it to a legislation and science of its own. To rebuild on words the fragments of this history, it seems to me as if, in a solemn trance, I was led through the ruins of a city whose only remains were tombs. From the sarcophagus and the urn I awake the Genius † of the extinguished Torch, and so closely does its shape resemble Eros, that at moments I scarcely know which of ye dictates to me—O Love! O Death!

* The reader will have the goodness to remember that this is said by the author of the original MS., not by the editor.

† The Greek Genius of Death.

And it stirred in the virgin's heart—this new, unfathomable, and divine emotion! Was it only the ordinary affection of the pulse and the fancy, of the eye to the Beautiful, of the ear to the Eloquent, or did it not justify the notion she herself conceived of it; that it was born not of the senses, that it was less of earthly and human love than the effect of some wondrous, but not unholy, charm? I said that, from that day in which, no longer with awe and trembling, she surrendered herself to the influence of Zanoni, she had sought to put her thoughts into words. Let the thoughts attest their own nature.

THE SELFCONFESSIONAL.

"Is it the Daylight that shines on me, or the memory of thy presence? Wherever I look, the world seems full of thee; in every ray that trembles on the water, that smiles upon the leaves, I behold but a likeness to thine eyes. What is this change, that alters not only myself, but the face of the whole universe?

* * * * * * *

How instantaneously leapt into life the power with which thou swayest my heart in its ebb and flow. Thousands were around me, and I saw but thee. That was the Night in which I first entered upon the world which crowds life into a drama, and has no language but music. How strangely and how suddenly with thee became that world evermore connected! What the delusion of the stage was to others, thy presence was to me. My life, too, seemed to centre into those short hours, and from thy lips I heard a music, mute to all ears but mine. I sit in the room where my father dwelt. Here, on that happy night, forgetting why *they* were so happy, I shrunk into the shadow, and sought to guess what thou wert to me; and my mother's low voice woke me, and I crept to my father's side, close—close, from fear of my own thoughts.

"Ah, sweet and sad was the morrow to that night, when thy lips warned me of the Future! An orphan now—what is there that lives for me to think of, to dream upon, to revere, but thou!

"How tenderly thou hast rebuked me for the grievous wrong that my thoughts did thee! Why should I have shuddered to feel thee glancing upon my thoughts like the beam on the solitary tree, to which thou didst once liken me so well? It was—it was, that, like the tree, I struggled for the light, and the light came. They tell me of love, and my very life of the stage breathes the language of love into my lips. No; again

and again, I know *that* is not the love that I feel for thee! It is not a passion, it is a thought! I ask not to be loved again. I murmur not that thy words are stern and thy looks are cold. I ask not if I have rivals; I sigh not to be fair in thine eyes. It is my *spirit* that would blend itself with thine. I would give worlds, though we were apart, though oceans rolled between us, to know the hour in which thy gaze was lifted to the stars; in which thy heart poured itself in prayer. They tell me thou art more beautiful than the marble images, that are fairer than all human forms; but I have never dared to gaze steadfastly on thy face, that memory might compare thee with the rest. Only thine eyes, and thy soft, calm smile, haunt me; as when I look upon the moon, all that passes into my heart is her silent light.

* * * * * * *

"Often, when the air is calm, I have thought that I hear the strains of my father's music; often, though long stilled in the grave, have they waked me from the dreams of the solemn night. Methinks, ere thou comest to me, that I hear them herald thy approach. Methinks I hear them wail and moan, when I sink back into myself on seeing thee depart. Thou art *of* that music, its spirit, its genius. My father must have guessed at thee and thy native regions, when the winds hushed to listen to his tones, and the world deemed him mad! I hear, where I sit, the far murmur of the sea. Murmur on, ye blessed waters! The waves are the pulses of the shore. They beat with the gladness of the morning wind—so beats my heart in the freshness and light that make up the thoughts of thee!

* * * * * * *

"Often in my childhood I have mused and asked for what I was born; and my soul answered my heart, and said: '*Thou wert born to worship!*' Yes; I know why the real world has ever seemed to me so false and cold. I know why the world of the stage charmed and dazzled me. I know why it was so sweet to sit apart and gaze my whole being into the distant heavens. My nature is not formed for this life, happy though that life seem to others. It is its very want to have ever before it some image loftier than itself! Stranger, in what realm above, when the grave is past, shall my soul, hour after hour, worship at the same source as thine?

* * * * * * *

"In the gardens of my neighbor there is a small fountain. I stood by it this morning after sunrise. How it sprung up, with

its eager spray, to the sunbeams! And then I thought that I should see thee again this day, and so sprung my heart to the new morning which thou bringest me from the skies.

* * * * * * *

"*I have* seen, I have *listened* to thee again. How bold I have become! I ran on with my childlike thoughts and stories, my recollections of the past, as if I had known thee from an infant. Suddenly the idea of my presumption struck me. I stopped and timidly sought thine eyes.

"'Well, and when you found that the nightingale refused to sing?—'

"'Ah!' I said, 'what to thee this history of the heart of a child?'

"'Viola,' didst thou answer, with that voice so inexpressibly calm and earnest; 'Viola, the darkness of a child's heart is often but the shadow of a star. Speak on! And thy nightingale, when they caught and caged it, refused to sing?—'

"'And I placed the cage yonder, amidst the vine-leaves, and took up my lute and spoke to it on the strings; for I thought that all music was its native language, and it would understand that I sought to comfort it.'

"'Yes,' saidst thou. 'And at last it answered thee, but not with song—in a sharp, brief cry; so mournful that thy hands let fall the lute, and the tears gushed from thine eyes. So softly didst thou unbar the cage, and the nightingale flew into yonder thicket; and thou heardst the foliage rustle, and looking through the moonlight, thine eyes saw that it had found its mate. It sang to thee then from the boughs a long, loud, joyous jubilee. And musing, thou didst feel that it was not the vine-leaves or the moonlight that made the bird give melody to night; and that the secret of its music was the presence of a thing beloved.'

"How didst thou know my thoughts in that childlike time better than I knew myself? How is the humble life of my past years, with its mean events, so mysteriously familiar to thee, bright stranger! I wonder—but I do not again dare to fear thee!

* * * * * * *

"Once the thought of him oppressed and weighed me down. As an infant that longs for the moon, my being was one vague desire for something never to be attained. Now I feel rather as if to think of thee sufficed to remove every fetter from my spirit. I float in the still seas of light, and nothing

seems too high for my wings, too glorious for my eyes. It was mine ignorance that made me fear thee. A knowledge that is not in books, seems to breathe around thee as an atmosphere. How little have I read! How little have I learned! Yet when thou art by my side, it seems as if the veil were lifted from all wisdom and all nature. I startle when I look even at the words I have written; they seem not to come from myself, but are the signs of another language which thou hast taught my heart, and which my hand traces rapidly, as at thy dictation. Sometimes, while I write or muse, I could fancy that I heard light wings hovering around me, and saw dim shapes of beauty floating round, and vanishing as they smiled upon me. No unquiet and fearful dream ever comes to me now in sleep, yet sleep and waking are alike but as one dream. In sleep, I wander with thee, not through the paths of earth, but through impalpable air—an air which seems a music—upward and upward, as the soul mounts on the tones of a lyre! Till I knew thee, I was as a slave to the earth. Thou hast given to me the liberty of the universe! Before, it was life; it seems to me now as if I had commenced eternity!

* * * * * * *

"Formerly, when I was to appear upon the stage, my heart beat more loudly. I trembled to encounter the audience, whose breath gave shame or renown; and now I have no fear of them. I see them, heed them, hear them not! I know that there will be music in my voice, for it is a hymn that I pour to thee. Thou never comest to the theatre; and that no longer grieves me. Thou art become too sacred to appear a part of the common world, and I feel glad that thou art not by when crowds have a right to judge me.

* * * * * * *

"And he spoke to me of ANOTHER: to another he would consign me! No, it is not love that I feel for thee, Zanoni; or why did I hear thee without anger? Why did thy command seem to me not a thing impossible! As the strings of the instrument obey the hand of the master, thy look modulates the wildest chords of my heart to thy will. If it please thee—yes—let it be so. Thou art Lord of my destinies; they cannot rebel against thee! I almost think I could love him, whoever it be, on whom thou wouldst shed the rays that circumfuse thyself. Whatever thou hast touched, I love; whatever thou speakest of, I love. Thy hand played with these vine-leaves; I wear them in my bosom. Thou seemest to me the source of all love; too

high and too bright to be loved thyself, but darting light into other objects, on which the eye can gaze less dazzled. No, no; it is not love that I feel for thee, and therefore it is that I do not blush to nourish and confess it. Shame on me if I loved, knowing myself so worthless a thing to thee!

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"ANOTHER! My memory echoes back that word. Another! Dost thou mean that I shall see thee no more? It is not sadness—it is not despair that seizes me. I cannot weep. It is an utter sense of desolation. I am plunged back into the common life; and I shudder coldly at the solitude. But I will obey thee, if thou wilt. Shall I not see thee again beyond the grave? Oh, how sweet it were to die!

"Why do I not struggle from the web in which my will is thus entangled? Hast thou a right to dispose of me thus? Give me back—give me back—the life I knew before I gave life itself away to thee. Give me back the careless dreams of my youth; my liberty of heart that sung aloud as it walked the earth. Thou hast disenchanted me of everything that is not of thyself. Where was the sin, at least, to think of thee? To see thee? Thy kiss still glows upon my hand: is that hand mine to bestow? Thy kiss claimed and hallowed it to thyself. Stranger, I will *not* obey thee.

* * * * * * *

"Another day—one day of the fatal three is gone! It is strange to me that since the sleep of the last night, a deep calm has settled upon my breast. I feel so assured that my very being is become a part of thee, that I cannot believe that my life can be separated from thine; and in this conviction I repose, and smile even at thy words and my own fears. Thou art fond of one maxim, which thou repeatest in a thousand forms: that the beauty of the soul is faith; that as ideal loveliness to the sculptor, faith is to the heart; that faith, rightly understood, extends over all the works of the Creator, whom we can know but through belief; that it embraces a tranquil confidence in ourselves, and a serene repose as to our future; that it is the moonlight that sways the tides of the human sea. That faith I comprehend now. I reject all doubt, all fear. I know that I have inextricably linked the whole that makes the inner life to thee; and thou canst not tear me from thee, if thou wouldst! And this change from struggle into calm came to me with sleep—a sleep without a dream; but when I woke, it was with a mysterious sense of happiness, an indistinct memory of some-

thing blessed, as if thou hadst cast from afar off a smile upon my slumber. At night I was so sad; not a blossom that had not closed itself up as if never more to open to the sun; and the night itself, in the heart as on the earth, has ripened the blossoms into flowers. The world is beautiful once more, but beautiful in repose—not a breeze stirs thy tree—not a doubt my soul!"

CHAPTER VI.

"Tu vegga o per violenzia o per inganno
Patire o disonore o mortal danno." *
—*Orl. Fur.*, Cant. xlii. i.

It was a small cabinet; the walls were covered with pictures, one of which was worth more than the whole lineage of the owner of the palace. Oh, yes! Zanoni was right. The painter *is* a magician; the gold he at least wrings from his crucible is no delusion. A Venetian noble might be a fribble, or an assassin, a scoundrel, or a dolt; worthless, or worse than worthless; yet he might have sate to Titian, and his portrait may be inestimable! A few inches of painted canvas a thousand times more valuable than a man with his veins and muscles, brain, will, heart, and intellect!

In this cabinet sate a man of about three and forty; dark-eyed, sallow, with short, prominent features, a massive conformation of jaw, and thick, sensual, but resolute lips; this man was the Prince di ——. His form, above the middle height, and rather inclined to corpulence, was clad in a loose dressing-robe of rich brocade. On a table before him lay an old-fashioned sword and hat, a mask, dice and dice-box, a portfolio, and an inkstand of silver curiously carved.

"Well, Mascari," said the Prince, looking up towards his parasite, who stood by the embrasure of the deep-set, barricadoed window; "Well! the Cardinal sleeps with his fathers. I require comfort for the loss of so excellent a relation; and where a more dulcet voice than Viola Pisani's?"

"Is your Excellency serious? So soon after the death of his Eminence?"

"It will be the less talked of, and I the less suspected. Hast thou ascertained the name of the insolent who baffled us that night, and advised the Cardinal the next day?"

"Not yet."

"Sapient Mascari! I will inform thee. It was the strange Unknown."

* Thou art about either through violence or artifice to suffer dishonor or mortal loss.

"The Signor Zanoni! Are you sure, my Prince?"

"Mascari, yes. There is a tone in that man's voice that I never can mistake; so clear, and so commanding, when I hear it I almost fancy there is such a thing as conscience. However, we must rid ourselves of an impertinent. Mascari, Signor Zanoni hath not yet honored our poor house with his presence. He is a distinguished stranger; we must give a banquet in his honor."

"Ah, and the Cyprus wine! The cypress is a proper emblem of the grave."

"But this anon. I am superstitious: there are strange stories of Zanoni's power and foresight; remember the death of Ughelli. No matter! Though the Fiend were his ally, he should not rob me of my prize; no, nor my revenge."

"Your Excellency is infatuated; the actress has bewitched you."

"Mascari," said the Prince with a haughty smile, "through these veins rolls the blood of the old Visconti; of those who boasted that no woman ever escaped their lust, and no man their resentment. The crown of my fathers has shrunk into a gewgaw and a toy; their ambition and their spirit are undecayed. My honor is now enlisted in this pursuit—Viola must be mine!"

"Another ambuscade?" said Mascari inquiringly.

"Nay, why not enter the house itself? The situation is lonely, and the door is not made of iron."

"But what if, on her return home, she tell the tale of our violence? A house forced—a virgin stolen! Reflect; though the feudal privileges are not destroyed, even a Visconti is not now above the law."

"Is he not, Mascari? Fool! In what age of the world, even if the Madmen of France succeed in their chimeras, will the iron of law not bend itself, like an osier twig, to the strong hand of power and gold? But look not so pale, Mascari, I have foreplanned all things. The day that she leaves this palace, she will leave it for France, with Monsieur Jean Nicot."

Before Mascari could reply, the gentleman of the chamber announced the Signor Zanoni.

The Prince involuntarily laid his hand upon the sword placed on the table, then with a smile at his own impulse, rose, and met his visitor at the threshold, with all the profuse and respectful courtesy of Italian simulation.

"This is an honor highly prized," said the Prince. "I have long desired to clasp the hand of one so distinguished—"

"And I give it in the spirit with which you seek it," replied Zanoni.

The Neapolitan bowed over the hand he pressed; but as he touched it, a shiver came over him, and his heart stood still.

Zanoni bent on him his dark, smiling eyes, and then seated himself with a familiar air.

"Thus it is signed and sealed; I mean our friendship, noble Prince. And now I will tell you the object of my visit. I find, Excellency, that, unconsciously perhaps, we are rivals. Can we not accommodate our pretensions?"

"Ah!" said the Prince carelessly, "you then were the cavalier who robbed me of the reward of my chase. All stratagems fair, in love as in war. Reconcile our pretensions! Well, here is the dice-box; let us throw for her. He who casts the lowest shall resign his claim."

"Is this a decision by which you will promise to be bound?"

"Yes, on my faith."

"And for him who breaks his word so plighted, what shall be the forfeit?"

"The sword lies next to the dice-box, Signor Zanoni. Let him who stands not by his honor, fall by the sword."

"And you invoke that sentence if either of us fail his word? Be it so! Let Signor Mascari cast for us."

"Well said! Mascari, the dice!"

The Prince threw himself back in his chair; and, world-hardened as he was, could not suppress the glow of triumph and satisfaction that spread itself over his features. Mascari took up the three dice, and rattled them noisily in the box. Zanoni, leaning his cheek on his hand, and bending over the table, fixed his eye steadfastly on the parasite; Mascari in vain struggled to extricate himself from that searching gaze: he grew pale, and trembled; he put down the box.

"I give the first throw to your Excellency. Signor Mascari, be pleased to terminate our suspense."

Again Mascari took up the box; again his hand shook, so that the dice rattled within. He threw; the numbers were sixteen.

"It is a high throw," said Zanoni calmly: "nevertheless, Signor Mascari, I do not despond."

Mascari gathered up the dice, shook the box, and rolled the contents once more on the table; the number was the highest that can be thrown—eighteen.

The Prince darted a glance of fire at his minion, who stood

with gaping mouth, staring at the dice, and trembling from head to foot.

"I have won, you see," said Zanoni; "may we be friends still?"

"Signor," said the Prince, obviously struggling with anger and confusion, "the victory is yours. But pardon me, you have spoken lightly of this young girl—will anything tempt you to yield your claim?"

"Ah, do not think so ill of my gallantry; and," resumed Zanoni, with a stern meaning in his voice, "forget not the forfeit your own lips have named."

The Prince knit his brow, but constrained the haughty answer that was his first impulse.

"Enough!" he said, forcing a smile; "I yield. Let me prove that I do not yield ungraciously: will you favor me with your presence at a little feast I propose to give in honor,"—he added, with a sardonic mockery—"of the elevation of my kinsman, the late Cardinal, of pious memory, to the true seat of St. Peter?"

"It is, indeed, a happiness to hear one command of yours I can obey."

Zanoni then turned the conversation, talked lightly and gayly, and soon afterwards departed.

"Villain!" then exclaimed the Prince, grasping Mascari by the collar, "you betrayed me!"

"I assure your Excellency that the dice were properly arranged; he should have thrown twelve; but he is the Devil, and that's the end of it."

"There is no time to be lost," said the Prince, quitting his hold of his parasite, who quietly settled his cravat.

"My blood is up: I will win this girl, if I die for it! What noise is that?"

"It is but the sword of your illustrious ancestor that has fallen from the table."

CHAPTER VII.

"Il ne faut appeller aucun ordre si ce n'est en tems clair et serein."
—*Les Clavicules du Rabbi Salomon.*

LETTER FROM ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

My art is already dim and troubled. I have lost the tranquillity which is power. I cannot influence the decisions of those whom I would most guide to the shore; I see them wander farther and deeper into the infinite ocean, where our barks sail evermore to the horizon that flies before us! Amazed

* No order of spirits must be invoked unless the weather be clear and serene.

and awed to find that I can only warn where I would control, I have looked into my own soul. It is true that the desires of earth chain me to the Present, and shut me from the solemn secrets which Intellect, purified from all the dross of the clay, alone can examine and survey. The stern condition on which we hold our nobler and diviner gifts darkens our vision towards the future of those for whom we know the human infirmities of jealousy, or hate, or love. Mejnour, all around me is mist and haze; I have gone back in our sublime existence; and from the bosom of the imperishable youth that blooms only in the spirit, springs up the dark poison-flower of human love.

This man is not worthy of her—I know that truth; yet in his nature are the seeds of good and greatness, if the tares and weeds of worldly vanities and fears would suffer them to grow. If she were his, and I had thus transplanted to another soil the passion that obscures my gaze and disarms my power, unseen, unheard, unrecognized, I could watch over his fate, and secretly prompt his deeds, and minister to her welfare through his own. But time rushes on! Through the shadows that encircle me, I see, gathering round her, the darkest dangers. No choice but flight; no escape, save with him or me. With me! The rapturous thought—the terrible conviction! With me! Mejnour, canst thou wonder that I would save her from myself? A moment in the life of ages, a bubble on the shoreless sea. What else to me can be human love? And in this exquisite nature of hers, more pure, more spiritual, even in its young affections than ever heretofore the countless volumes of the heart, race after race, have given to my gaze, there is yet a deep-buried feeling that warns me of inevitable woe. Thou, austere and remorseless Hierophant; thou who hast sought to convert to our brotherhood every spirit that seemed to thee most high and bold; even thou knowest, by horrible experience, how vain the hope to banish *fear* from the heart of woman. My life would be to her one marvel. Even if, on the other hand, I sought to guide her path through the realms of terror to the light, think of the Haunter of the Threshold, and shudder with me at the awful hazard! I have endeavored to fill the Englishman's ambition with the true glory of his art; but the restless spirit of his ancestor still seems to whisper in him, and to attract to the spheres in which it lost its own wandering way. There is a mystery in man's inheritance from his fathers. Peculiarities of the mind, as diseases of the body, rest dormant for generations, to revive in some distant descendant, baffle all treatment and elude all skill. Come to me from thy solitude

amidst the wrecks of Rome! I pant for a living confidant; for one who in the old time has himself known jealousy and love. I have sought commune with Adon-Ai: but his presence, that once inspired such heavenly content with knowledge, and so serene a confidence in destiny, now only troubles and perplexes me. From the height from which I strive to search into the shadows of things to come, I see confused spectres of menace and wrath. Methinks I behold a ghastly limit to the wondrous existence I have held; methinks that, after ages of the Ideal Life, I see my course merge into the most stormy whirlpool of the Real. Where the stars opened to me their gates, there looms a scaffold; thick steams of blood rise as from a shambles. What is more strange to me, a creature here, a very type of the false ideal of common men—body and mind, a hideous mockery of the art that shapes the Beautiful, and the desires that seek the Perfect,—ever haunts my vision amidst these perturbed and broken clouds of the fate to be. By that shadowy scaffold it stands and gibbers at me, with lips dropping slime and gore. Come, O friend of the far-time; for me, at least, thy wisdom has not purged away thy human affections. According to the bonds of our solemn order, reduced now to thee and myself, lone survivors of so many haughty and glorious aspirants, thou art pledged, too, to warn the descendant of those whom thy counsels sought to initiate into the great secret in a former age. The last of that bold Visconti, who was once thy pupil, is the relentless persecutor of this fair child. With thoughts of lust and murder, he is digging his own grave; thou mayst yet daunt him from his doom. And I also mysteriously, by the same bond, am pledged to obey, if he so command, a less guilty descendant of a baffled but nobler student. If he reject my counsel, and insist upon the pledge, Mejnour, thou wilt have another Neophyte. Beware of another victim! Come to me! This will reach thee with all speed. Answer it by the pressure of one hand that I can dare to clasp!

CHAPTER VIII.

"Il lupo
Ferito, credo, mi conobbe e 'ncontro
Mi venne con la bocca sanguinosa." *

—*Aminta*, At. iv. sc. i.

At Naples, the Tomb of Virgil, beetling over the cave of Posilipo, is reverenced, not with the feelings that should hallow

* The wounded wolf, I think, knew me, and came to meet me with its bloody mouth.

the memory of the poet, but the awe that wraps the memory of the magician. To his charms they ascribe the hollowing of that mountain passage; and tradition yet guards his tomb by the spirits he had raised to construct the cavern. This spot, in the immediate vicinity of Viola's home, had often attracted her solitary footsteps. She had loved the dim and solemn fancies that beset her as she looked into the lengthened gloom of the grotto, or, ascending to the tomb, gazed from the rock on the dwarfed figures of the busy crowd that seemed to creep like insects along the windings of the soil below; and now, at noon, she bent thither her thoughtful way. She threaded the narrow path, she passed the gloomy vineyard that clambers up the rock, and gained the lofty spot, green with moss and luxuriant foliage, where the dust of him who yet soothes and elevates the minds of men is believed to rest. From afar rose the huge fortress of St. Elmo, frowning darkly amidst spires and domes that glittered in the sun. Dulled in its azure splendor lay the Siren's sea; and the gray smoke of Vesuvius, in the clear distance, soared like a moving pillar into the lucid sky. Motionless on the brink of the precipice, Viola looked upon the lovely and living world that stretched below; and the sullen vapor of Vesuvius fascinated her eye yet more than the scattered gardens, or the gleaming Caprea, smiling amidst the smiles of the sea. She heard not a step that had followed her on her path, and started to hear a voice at hand. So sudden was the apparition of the form that stood by her side, emerging from the bushes that clad the crags, and so singularly did it harmonize in its uncouth ugliness with the wild nature of the scene immediately around her, and the wizard traditions of the place, that the color left her cheek, and a faint cry broke from her lips.

"Tush, pretty trembler; do not be frightened at my face," said the man, with a bitter smile. "After three months' marriage, there is no difference between ugliness and beauty. Custom is a great leveller. I was coming to your house when I saw you leave it; so, as I have matters of importance to communicate, I ventured to follow your footsteps. My name is Jean Nicot, a name already favorably known as a French artist. The art of painting and the art of music are nearly connected, and the stage is an altar that unites the two."

There was something frank and unembarrassed in the man's address, that served to dispel the fear his appearance had occasioned. He seated himself, as he spoke, on a crag beside her, and, looking up steadily into her face, continued:

"You are very beautiful, Viola Pisani, and I am not surprised at the number of your admirers. If I presume to place myself in the list, it is because I am the only one who loves thee honestly, and woos thee fairly. Nay, look not so indignant! Listen to me. Has the Prince di —— ever spoken to thee of marriage! Or the beautiful impostor, Zanoni? Or the young, blue-eyed Englishman, Clarence Glyndon! It is marriage, it is a home, it is safety, it is reputation, that I offer to thee. And these last, when the straight form grows crooked, and the bright eyes dim. What say you?" and he attempted to seize her hand.

Viola shrunk from him, and silently turned to depart. He rose abruptly, and placed himself on her path.

"Actress, you must hear me! Do you know what this calling of the stage is in the eyes of prejudice, that is, of the common opinion of mankind? It is to be a Princess before the lamps, and a Pariah before the day. No man believes in your virtue, no man credits your vows; you are the puppet that they consent to trick out with tinsel for their amusement, not an idol for their worship. Are you so enamoured of this career that you scorn even to think of security and honor? Perhaps you are different from what you seem. Perhaps you laugh at the prejudice that would degrade you, and would wisely turn it to advantage. Speak frankly to me; I have no prejudice either. Sweet one, I am sure we should agree. Now, this Prince di ——, I have a message from him. Shall I deliver it?"

Never had Viola felt as she felt then; never had she so thoroughly seen all the perils of her forlorn condition and her fearful renown. Nicot continued:

"Zanoni would but amuse himself with thy vanity; Glyndon would despise himself, if he offered thee his name—and thee, if thou wouldst accept it; but the Prince di —— is in earnest, and he is wealthy. Listen!"

And Nicot approached his lips to her, and hissed a sentence which she did not suffer him to complete. She darted from him with one glance of unutterable disdain. As he strove to regain his hold of her arm, he lost his footing, and fell down the sides of the rock, till, bruised and lacerated, a pine-branch saved him from the yawning abyss below. She heard his exclamation of rage and pain, as she bounded down the path; and without once turning to look behind, regained her home. By the porch stood Glyndon, conversing with Gionetta. She passed him abruptly, entered the house, and, sinking on the floor, wept loud and passionately.

Glyndon, who had followed her in surprise, vainly sought to soothe and calm her. She would not reply to his questions; she did not seem to listen to his protestations of love, till suddenly, as Nicot's terrible picture of the world's judgment of that profession, which to her younger thoughts had seemed the service of song and the Beautiful, forced itself upon her, she raised her face from her hands, and looking steadily upon the Englishman, said: "False one, dost thou talk to me of love?"

"By my honor, words fail to tell thee how I love!"

"Wilt thou give me thy home—thy name? Dost thou woo me as thy wife?" And at that moment, had Glyndon answered as his better angel would have counselled, perhaps, in that revolution of her whole mind, which the words of Nicot had effected, which made her despise her very self, sicken of her lofty dreams, despair of the future, and distrust her whole ideal,—perhaps, I say, in restoring her self-esteem, he would have won her confidence and ultimately secured her love. But, against the prompting of his nobler nature, rose up at that sudden question all those doubts which, as Zanoni had so well implied, made the true enemies of his soul. Was he thus suddenly to be entangled into a snare laid for his credulity by deceivers? Was she not instructed to seize the moment to force him into an avowal which prudence must repent? Was not the great Actress rehearsing a premeditated part? He turned round, as these thoughts, the children of the world, passed across him, for he literally fancied that he heard the sarcastic laugh of Mervale without. Nor was he deceived. Mervale was passing by the threshold, and Gionetta had told him his friend was within. Who does not know the effect of the world's laugh? Mervale was the personation of the world. The whole world seemed to shout derision in those ringing tones. He drew back, he recoiled. Viola followed him with her earnest, impatient eyes. At last he faltered forth: "Do all of thy profession, beautiful Viola, exact marriage as the sole condition of love?" Oh, bitter question! Oh, poisoned taunt! He repented it the moment after. He was seized with remorse of reason, of feeling, and of conscience. He saw her form shrink, as it were, at his cruel words. He saw the color come and go, to leave the writhing lips like marble; and then, with a sad, gentle look of self-pity, rather than reproach, she pressed her hands tightly to her bosom, and said:

"He was right! Pardon me, Englishman; I see now, indeed, that I am the Pariah and the outcast."

"Hear me. I retract. Viola, Viola! It is for you to forgive!"

But Viola waved him from her, and smiling mournfully, as she passed him by, glided from the chamber; and he did not dare to detain her.

CHAPTER IX.

DAFNE. Ma, chi lung' è d'Amor?
TIRSI. Chi teme e fugge.
DAFNE. E che giova fuggir da lui ch' ha l'ali?
TIRSI. *Amor nascente ha corte l'ali!*" *

Aminta, At. ii. sc. ii.

WHEN Glyndon found himself without Viola's house Mervale, still loitering at the door, seized his arm. Glyndon shook him off abruptly.

"Thou and thy counsels," said he bitterly, "have made me a coward and a wretch. But I will go home—I will write to her. I will pour out my whole soul; she will forgive me yet."

Mervale, who was a man of imperturbable temper, arranged his ruffles, which his friend's angry gesture had a little discomposed, and not till Glyndon had exhausted himself awhile by passionate exclamations and reproaches did the experienced angler begin to tighten the line. He then drew from Glyndon the explanation of what had passed, and artfully sought not to irritate, but soothe, him. Mervale, indeed, was by no means a bad man; he had stronger moral notions than are common amongst the young. He sincerely reproved his friend for harboring dishonorable intentions with regard to the actress. "Because I would not have her thy wife, I never dreamed that thou shouldst degrade her to thy mistress. Better of the two an imprudent match than an illicit connection. But pause yet; do not act on the impulse of the moment."

"But there is no time to lose. I have promised to Zanoni to give him my answer by to-morrow night. Later than that time, all option ceases."

"Ah!" said Mervale, "this seems suspicious. Explain yourself."

And Glyndon, in the earnestness of his passion, told his friend what had passed between himself and Zanoni, suppressing only, he scarce knew why, the reference to his ancestor and the mysterious brotherhood.

* DAFNE. But who is far from Love?—TIRSI. He who fears and flies.—DAFNE. What use to flee from one who has wings?—TIRSI. The wings of Love, while he yet grows, are short,

This recital gave to Mervale all the advantage he could desire. Heavens, with what sound, shrewd common-sense he talked! How evidently some charlatanic coalition between the actress, and perhaps—who knows?—her clandestine protector, sated with possession! How equivocal the character of one, the position of the other! What cunning in the question of the actress! How profoundly had Glyndon, at the first suggestion of his sober reason, seen through the snare. What! Was he to be thus mystically cajoled and hurried into a rash marriage, because Zanoni, a mere stranger, told him with a grave face that he must decide before the clock struck a certain hour?

"Do this, at least," said Mervale, reasonably enough; "wait till the time expires; it is but another day. Baffle Zanoni. He tells thee that he will meet thee before midnight to-morrow, and defies thee to avoid him. Pooh! Let us quit Naples for some neighboring place, where, unless he be indeed the Devil, he cannot possibly find us. Show him that you will not be led blindfold even into an act that you meditate yourself. Defer to write to her, or to see her, till after to-morrow. This is all I ask. Then visit her, and decide for yourself."

Glyndon was staggered. He could not combat the reasonings of his friend; he was not convinced, but he hesitated; and at that moment Nicot passed them. He turned round, and stopped, as he saw Glyndon.

"Well, and do you think still of the Pisani?"

"Yes; and you—"

"Have seen and conversed with her. She shall be Madame Nicot before this day week! I am going to the café, in the Toledo; and hark ye, when next you meet your friend Signor Zanoni, tell him that he has twice crossed my path. Jean Nicot, though a painter, is a plain, honest man, and always pays his debts."

"It is a good doctrine in money matters," said Mervale; "as to revenge, it is not so moral, and certainly not so wise. But is it in your love that Zanoni has crossed your path? How that if your suit prosper so well?"

"Ask Viola Pisani that question. Bah! Glyndon, she is a prude only to thee. But I have no prejudices. Once more, farewell."

"Rouse thyself, man!" said Mervale, slapping Glyndon on the shoulder. "What think you of your fair one now?"

"This man must lie."

"Will you write to her at once?"

"No ; if she be really playing a game, I could renounce her without a sigh. I will watch her closely ; and at all events, Zanoni shall not be the master of my fate. Let us, as you advise, leave Naples at daybreak to-morrow."

CHAPTER X.

"O chiunque tu sia, che fuor d'ogni uso
Pieghi Natura ad opre altere e strane,
E, spiando i secreti, entro al piu chiuso
Spazj a tua voglia delle menti umane,
Deh—Dimmi !" *—*Gerus. Lib.*, cant. x. xviii.

EARLY the next morning the young Englishmen mounted their horses, and took the road towards Baiæ. Glyndon left word at his hotel that if Signor Zanoni sought him, it was in the neighborhood of that once celebrated watering-place of the ancients that he should be found.

They passed by Viola's house, but Glyndon resisted the temptation of pausing there ; and after threading the grotto of Posilipo, they wound by a circuitous route back into the suburbs of the city, and took the opposite road, which conducts to Portici and Pompeii. It was late at noon when they arrived at the former of these places. Here they halted to dine ; for Mervale had heard much of the excellence of the macaroni at Portici, and Mervale was a *bon vivant.*

They put up at an inn of very humble pretensions, and dined under an awning. Mervale was more than usually gay ; he pressed the Làcrima upon his friend, and conversed gayly.

"Well, my dear friend, we have foiled Signor Zanoni in one of his predictions at least. You will have no faith in him hereafter."

"The ides are come, not gone."

"Tush ! If he be the soothsayer, you are not the Cæsar. It is your vanity that makes you credulous. Thank Heaven, I do not think myself of such importance, that the operations of nature should be changed in order to frighten me."

"But why should the operations of nature be changed ? There may be a deeper philosophy than we dream of—a philosophy that discovers the secrets of nature, but does not alter, by penetrating, its course."

"Ah, you relapse into your heretical credulity ; you seri-

* O thou, whoever thou art, who through every use bendest Nature to works foreign and strange—and by spying into her secrets, enterest, at thy will, into the closest recesses of the human mind—Oh speak, oh tell me !

ously suppose Zanoni to be a prophet—a reader of the future; perhaps an associate of genii and spirits!"

Here the landlord, a little, fat, oily fellow, came up with a fresh bottle of Làcrima. He hoped their Excellencies were pleased. He was most touched—touched to the heart,—that they liked the macaroni. Were their Excellencies going to Vesuvius? There was a slight eruption; they could not see it where they were, but it was pretty, and would be prettier still after sunset.

"A capital idea!" cried Mervale. "What say you, Glyndon?"

"I have not yet seen an eruption; I should like it much."

"But is there no danger?" asked the prudent Mervale.

"Oh, not at all; the mountain is very civil at present. It only plays a little, just to amuse their Excellencies the English."

"Well, order the horses, and bring the bill; we will go before it is dark. Clarence, my friend—*Nunc est bibendum;* but take care of the *pede libero*, which will scarce do for walking on lava!"

The bottle was finished, the bill paid; the gentlemen mounted, the landlord bowed, and they bent their way, in the cool of the delightful evening, towards Resina.

The wine, perhaps the excitement of his thoughts, animated Glyndon, whose unequal spirits were, at times, high and brilliant as those of a schoolboy released; and the laughter of the northern tourists sounded oft and merrily along the melancholy domains of buried cities.

Hesperus had lighted his lamp amidst the rosy skies as they arrived at Resina. Here they quitted their horses, and took mules and a guide. As the sky grew darker and more dark, the Mountain Fire burned with an intense lustre. In various streaks and streamlets, the fountain of flame rolled down the dark summit, and the Englishmen began to feel increase upon them, as they ascended, that sensation of solemnity and awe, which makes the very atmosphere that surrounds the Giant of the Plains of the Antique Hades.

It was night, when, leaving the mules, they ascended on foot, accompanied by their guide, and a peasant who bore a rude torch. The guide was a conversible, garrulous fellow, like most of his country and his calling; and Mervale, who possessed a sociable temper, loved to amuse or to instruct himself on every incidental occasion.

"Ah, Excellency," said the guide, "your countrymen have a strong passion for the volcano. Long life to them! They

bring us plenty of money. If our fortunes depended on the Neapolitans, we should starve."

"True, they have no curiosity," said Mervale. "Do you remember, Glyndon, the contempt with which that old Count said to us, 'You will go to Vesuvius, I suppose? I have never been; why should I go? You have cold, you have hunger, you have fatigue, you have danger, and all for nothing but to see fire, which looks just as well in a brazier as on a mountain.' Ha! ha! the old fellow was right."

"But, Excellency," said the guide, "that is not all; some cavaliers think to ascend the mountain without our help. I am sure they deserve to tumble into the crater."

"They must be bold fellows to go alone; you don't often find such."

"Sometimes among the French, Signor. But the other night—I never was so frightened—I had been with an English party; and a lady had left a pocket-book on the mountain, where she had been sketching. She offered me a handsome sum to return for it, and bring it to her at Naples. So I went in the evening. I found it, sure enough; and was about to return, when I saw a figure that seemed to emerge from the crater itself. The air there was so pestiferous, that I could not have conceived a human creature could breathe it, and live. I was so astounded that I stood still as a stone, till the figure came over the hot ashes, and stood before me, face to face. Santa Maria, what a head!"

"What! Hideous?"

"No; so beautiful, but so terrible. It had nothing human in its aspect."

"And what said the salamander?"

"Nothing! It did not even seem to perceive me, though I was near as I am to you; but its eyes seemed to emerge prying into the air. It passed by me quickly, and, walking across a stream of burning lava, soon vanished on this other side of the mountain. I was curious and foolhardy, and resolved to see if I could bear the atmosphere which the visitor had left; but, though I did not advance within thirty yards of the spot at which he had first appeared, I was driven back by a vapor that well-nigh stifled me. Cospetto! I have spat blood ever since."

"Now will I lay a wager that you fancy this fire king must be Zanoni," whispered Mervale, laughing.

The little party had now arrived nearly at the summit of the mountain; and unspeakably grand was the spectacle on which

they gazed. From the crater arose a vapor, intensely dark, that overspread the whole background of the heavens; in the centre whereof rose a flame that assumed a form singularly beautiful. It might have been compared to a crest of gigantic feathers, the diadem of the mountain, high-arched and drooping downward, with the hues delicately shaded off, and the whole shifting and tremulous as the plumage on a warrior's helmet. The glare of the flame spread, luminous and crimson, over the dark and rugged ground on which they stood, and drew an innumerable variety of shadows from crag and hollow. An oppressive and sulphurous exhalation served to increase the gloomy and sublime terror of the place. But on turning from the mountain, and towards the distant and unseen ocean, the contrast was wonderfully great; the heavens serene and blue, the stars still and calm as the eyes of Divine Love. It was as if the realms of the opposing principles of evil and of good were brought in one view before the gaze of man! Glyndon—once more the enthusiast, the artist—was enchained and entranced by emotions vague and undefinable, half of delight and half of pain. Leaning on the shoulder of his friend, he gazed around him, and heard, with deepening awe, the rumbling of the earth below, the wheels and voices of the Ministry of Nature in her darkest and most inscrutable recess. Suddenly as a bomb from a shell, a huge stone was flung hundreds of yards up from the jaws of the crater, and, falling with a mighty crash upon the rock below, split into ten thousand fragments, which bounded down the sides of the mountain, sparkling and groaning as they went. One of these, the largest fragment, struck the narrow space of soil between the Englishman and the guide, not three feet from the spot where the former stood. Mervale uttered an exclamation of terror, and Glyndon held his breath, and shuddered.

"*Diavolo!*" cried the guide. "Descend, Excellencies—descend! We have not a moment to lose: follow me close!"

So saying, the guide and the peasant fled with as much swiftness as they were able to bring to bear. Mervale, ever more prompt and ready than his friend, imitated their example; and Glyndon, more confused than alarmed, followed close. But they had not gone many yards before, with a rushing and sudden blast, came from the crater an enormous volume of vapor. It pursued—it overtook—it overspread them. It swept the light from the heavens. All was abrupt and utter darkness; and through the gloom was heard the shout of the guide, already distant, and lost in an instant amidst the sound of the rushing

gust, and the groans of the earth beneath. Glyndon paused. He was separated from his friend—from the guide. He was alone—with the Darkness and the Terror. The vapor rolled sullenly away ; the form of the plumed fire was again dimly visible, and its struggling and perturbed reflection again shed a glow over the horrors of the path. Glyndon recovered himself, and sped onward. Below, he heard the voice of Mervale calling on him, though he no longer saw his form. The sound served as a guide. Dizzy and breathless, he bounded forward ; when—hark ! a sudden, sullen, slow, rolling sound in his ear ! He halted, and turned back to gaze. The fire had overflowed its course : it had opened itself a channel amidst the furrows of the mountain. The stream pursued him fast—fast ; and the hot breath of the chasing and preternatural foe came closer and closer upon his cheek ! He turned aside, he climbed desperately, with hands and feet, upon a crag, that, to the right, broke the scathed and blasted level of the soil. The stream rolled beside and beneath him, and then, taking a sudden wind around the spot on which he stood, interposed its liquid fire, a broad and impassable barrier, between his resting-place and escape. There he stood, cut off from descent, and with no alternative but to retrace his steps towards the crater, and thence seek, without guide or clue, some other pathway.

For a moment his courage left him : he cried in despair, and in that overstrained pitch of voice which is never heard afar off, to the guide, to Mervale, to return to aid him.

No answer came ; and the Englishman, thus abandoned solely to his own resources, felt his spirit and energy rise against the danger. He turned back, and ventured as far towards the crater as the noxious exhalation would permit ; then, gazing below, carefully and deliberately, he chalked out for himself a path, by which he trusted to shun the direction the fire-stream had taken ; and trod firmly and quickly over the crumbling and heated strata.

He had proceeded about fifty yards when he halted abruptly; an unspeakable and unaccountable horror, not hitherto experienced amidst all his peril, came over him. He shook in every limb ; his muscles refused his will ; he felt, as it were, palsied and death-stricken. The horror, I say, was unaccountable, for the path seemed clear and safe. The fire, above and behind, burned clear and far ; and beyond, the stars lent him their cheering guidance. No obstacle was visible ; no danger seemed at hand. As thus, spell-bound and panic-stricken, he stood chained to the soil, his breast heaving ; large drops roll-

ing down his brow; and his eyes starting wildly from their sockets; he saw before him, at some distance, gradually shaping itself more and more distinctly to his gaze, a Colossal Shadow—a shadow that seemed partially borrowed from the human shape, but immeasurably above the human stature; vague, dark, almost formless; and differing, he could not tell where or why, not only from the proportions, but also from the limbs and outline of man.

The glare of the volcano, that seemed to shrink and collapse from this gigantic and appalling apparition, nevertheless threw its light, redly and steadily, upon another shape that stood beside, quiet and motionless; and it was, perhaps, the contrast of these two things—the Being and the Shadow—that impressed the beholder with the difference between them—the Man and the Superhuman. It was but for a moment, nay, for the tenth part of a moment, that this sight was permitted to the wanderer. A second eddy of sulphurous vapors from the volcano, yet more rapidly, yet more densely than its predecessor, rolled over the mountain; and either the nature of the exhalation, or the excess of his own dread, was such, that Glyndon, after one wild gasp for breath, fell senseless on the earth.

CHAPTER XI.

"Was hab' ich
Wenn ich nicht Alles habe?—sprach der Jüngling." *
—*Das Verschleierte Bild zu Sais.*

MERVALE and the Italians arrived in safety at the spot where they had left the mules; and not until they had recovered their own alarm and breath did they think of Glyndon. But then, as the minutes passed, and he appeared not, Mervale, whose heart was as good, at least, as human hearts are in general, grew seriously alarmed, He insisted on returning, to search for his friend; and by dint of prodigal promises, prevailed at last on the guide to accompany him. The lower part of the mountain lay calm and white in the starlight; and the guide's practised eye could discern all objects on the surface, at a considerable distance. They had not, however, gone very far, before they perceived two forms slowly approaching towards them.

As they came near Mervale recognized the form of his friend. "Thank Heaven, he is safe," he cried, turning to the guide.

* "What have I, if I possess not All?" said the youth.

"Holy angels befriend us!" said the Italian, trembling; "Behold the very being that crossed me last Friday night. It is he! but his face is human now!"

"Signor Inglese," said the voice of Zanoni, as Glyndon—pale, wan, and silent—returned passively the joyous greeting of Mervale; "Signor Inglese, I told your friend that we should meet to-night. You see you have *not* foiled my prediction."

"But how? But where?" stammered Mervale, in great confusion and surprise.

"I found your friend stretched on the ground, overpowered by the mephitic exhalation of the crater. I bore him to a purer atmosphere; and, as I know the mountain well, I have conducted him safely to you. This is all our history. You see, sir, that were it not for that prophecy which you desired to frustrate, your friend would, ere this time, have been a corpse: one minute more, and the vapor had done its work. Adieu; good-night, and pleasant dreams."

"But, my preserver, you will not leave us!" said Glyndon anxiously, and speaking for the first time. "Will you not return with us?"

Zanoni paused, and drew Glyndon aside. "Young man," said he gravely, "it is necessary that we should again meet to-night. It is necessary that you should, ere the first hour of morning, decide on your own fate. I know that you have insulted her whom you profess to love. It is not too late to repent. Consult not your friend—he is sensible and wise; but not now is his wisdom needed. There are times in life when, from the imagination, and not the reason, should wisdom come; this, for you, is one of them. I ask not your answer now. Collect your thoughts; recover your jaded and scattered spirits. It wants two hours of midnight. Before midnight I will be with you."

"Incomprehensible being!" replied the Englishman, "I would leave the life you have preserved in your own hands; but what I have seen this night has swept even Viola from my thoughts. A fiercer desire than that of love burns in my veins: the desire not to resemble, but to surpass, my kind; the desire to penetrate and to share the secret of your own existence; the desire of a preternatural knowledge and unearthly power. I make my choice. In my ancestor's name, I adjure and remind thee of thy pledge. Instruct me; school me; make me thine; and I surrender to thee at once, and without a murmur, the woman whom, till I saw thee, I would have defied a world to obtain."

"I bid thee consider well; on the one hand, Viola, a tranquil home, a happy and serene life. On the other hand, all is darkness—darkness, that even these eyes cannot penetrate."

"But thou hast told me, that if I wed Viola, I must be contented with the common existence; if I refuse, it is to aspire to thy knowledge and thy power."

"Vain man! Knowledge and power are not happiness."

"But they are better than happiness. Say! If I marry Viola, wilt thou be my master—my guide? Say this, and I am resolved."

"It were impossible."

"Then I renounce her! I renounce love. I renounce happiness. Welcome solitude; welcome despair; if they are the entrances to thy dark and sublime secret."

"I will not take thy answer now. Before the last hour of night thou shalt give it in one word—ay or no! Farewell till then."

Zanoni waived his hand; and, descending rapidly, was seen no more.

Glyndon rejoined his impatient and wondering friend; but Mervale, gazing on his face, saw that a great change had passed there. The flexile and dubious expression of youth was forever gone. The features were locked, rigid, and stern; and so faded was the natural bloom, that an hour seemed to have done the work of years.

CHAPTER XII.

"Was ist's
Das hinter diesem Schleier sich verbirgt?"*
—*Das Verschleierte Bild zu Sais.*

On returning from Vesuvius or Pompeii, you enter Naples through its most animated, its most Neapolitan, quarter—through that quarter in which Modern life most closely resembles the Ancient; and in which, when, on a fair day, the thoroughfare swarms alike with Indolence and Trade, you are impressed at once with the recollection of that restless, lively race, from which the population of Naples derives its origin: so that in one day you may see at Pompeii the habitations of a remote age; and on the Mole, at Naples, you may imagine you behold the very beings with whom those habitations had been peopled.

But now, as the Englishmen rode slowly through the de-

* What is it that conceals itself behind this veil?

serted streets, lighted but by the lamps of heaven, all the gayety of day was hushed and breathless. Here and there, stretched under a portico or a dingy booth, were sleeping groups of houseless lazzaroni; a tribe now merging its indolent individuality amidst an energetic and active population.

The Englishmen rode on in silence; for Glyndon neither appeared to heed nor hear the questions and comments of Mervale, and Mervale himself was almost as weary as the jaded animal he bestrode.

Suddenly the silence of earth and ocean was broken by the sound of a distant clock, that proclaimed the quarter preceding the last hour of night. Glyndon started from his revery, and looked anxiously round. As the final stroke died, the noise of hoofs rung on the broad stones of the pavement; and from a narrow street to the right emerged the form of a solitary horseman. He neared the Englishmen, and Glyndon recognized the features and mien of Zanoni.

"What, do we meet again, Signor?" said Mervale, in a vexed but drowsy tone.

"Your friend and I have business together," replied Zanoni, as he wheeled his steed to the side of Glyndon. "But it will be soon transacted. Perhaps you, sir, will ride on to your hotel."

"Alone?"

"There is no danger!" returned Zanoni, with a slight expression of disdain in his voice.

"None to me—but to Glyndon?"

"Danger from me! Ah, perhaps you are right."

"Go on, my dear Mervale," said Glyndon. "I will join you before you reach the hotel."

Mervale nodded, whistled, and pushed his horse into a kind of amble.

"Now your answer—quick!"

"I have decided. The love of Viola has vanished from my heart. The pursuit is over."

"You have decided?"

"I have; and now my reward."

"Thy reward! Well; ere this hour to-morrow it shall await thee."

Zanoni gave the rein to his horse; it sprang forward with a bound; the sparks flew from its hoofs, and horse and rider disappeared amidst the shadows of the street whence they had emerged.

Mervale was surprised to see his friend by his side, a minute after they had parted.

"What has passed between you and Zanoni?"

"Mervale, do not ask me to-night; I am in a dream."

"I do not wonder at it, for even I am in a sleep. Let us push on."

In the retirement of his chamber, Glyndon sought to recollect his thoughts. He sat down on the foot of his bed, and pressed his hands tightly to his throbbing temples. The events of the last few hours; the apparition of the gigantic and shadowy Companion of the Mystic, amidst the fires and clouds of Vesuvius; the strange encounter with Zanoni himself, on the spot in which he could never, by ordinary reasoning, have calculated on finding Glyndon, filled his mind with emotions, in which terror and awe the least prevailed. A fire, the train of which had been long laid, was lighted at his heart—the asbestos-fire, that, once lit, is never to be quenched. All his early aspirations: his young ambition, his longings for the laurel, were merged in one passionate yearning to overpass the bounds of the common knowledge of man, and reach that solemn spot, between two worlds, on which the mysterious stranger appeared to have fixed his home.

Far from recalling with renewed affright the remembrance of the apparition that had so appalled him, the recollection only served to kindle and concentrate his curiosity into a burning focus. He had said aright—*love had vanished from his heart;* there was no longer a serene space amidst its disordered elements for human affection to move and breathe. The enthusiast was rapt from this earth; and he would have surrendered all that mortal beauty ever promised, that mortal hope ever whispered, for one hour with Zanoni beyond the portals of the visible world.

He rose, oppressed and fevered with the new thoughts that raged within him, and threw open his casement for air. The ocean lay suffused in the starry light, and the stillness of the heavens never more eloquently preached the morality of repose to the madness of earthly passions. But such was Glyndon's mood, that their very hush only served to deepen the wild desires that preyed upon his soul. And the solemn stars, that are mysteries in themselves, seemed by a kindred sympathy to agitate the wings of the spirit no longer contented with its cage. As he gazed, a star shot from its brethren, and vanished from the depth of space!

CHAPTER XIII.

"Oh, be gone!
By Heaven, I love thee better than myself,
For I came hither arm'd against myself."
—*Romeo and Juliet.*

THE young actress and Gionetta had returned from the theatre; and Viola, fatigued and exhausted, had thrown herself on a sofa, while Gionetta busied herself with the long tresses which, released from the fillet that bound them, half concealed the form of the actress, like a veil of threads of gold. As she smoothed the luxuriant locks, the old nurse ran gossiping on about the little events of the night, the scandal and politics of the scenes, and the tireroom. Gionetta was a worthy soul. Almanzor, in Dryden's tragedy of "Almahide," did not change sides with more gallant indifference than the exemplary nurse. She was at last grieved and scandalized that Viola had not selected one chosen cavalier. But the choice she left wholly to her fair charge. Zegri or Abencerrage, Glyndon or Zanoni, it had been the same to her, except that the rumors she had collected respecting the latter, combined with his own recommendations of his rival, had given her preference to the Englishman. She interpreted ill the impatient and heavy sigh with which Viola greeted her praises of Glyndon, and her wonder that he had of late so neglected his attentions behind the scenes, and she exhausted all her powers of panegyric upon the supposed object of the sigh. "And then too," she said, "if nothing else were to be said against the other Signor, it is enough that he is about to leave Naples."

"Leave Naples! Zanoni?"

"Yes, darling! In passing by the Mole to-day, there was a crowd round some outlandish-looking sailors. His ship arrived this morning, and anchors in the bay. The sailors say that they are to be prepared to sail with the first wind; they were taking in fresh stores. They—"

"Leave me, Gionetta! Leave me!"

The time had already passed when the girl could confide in Gionetta. Her thoughts had advanced to that point when the heart recoils from all confidence, and feels that it cannot be comprehended. Alone now, in the principal apartment of the house, she paced its narrow boundaries with tremulous and agitated steps; she recalled the frightful suit of Nicot; the injurious taunt of Glyndon; and she sickened at the remembrance of the hollow applauses which, bestowed on the actress, not the

woman, only subjected her to contumely and insult. In that room the recollection of her father's death, the withered laurel and the broken chords, rose chillingly before her. Hers, she felt, was a yet gloomier fate—the chords may break while the laurel is yet green. The lamp, waning in its socket, burned pale and dim, and her eyes instinctively turned from the darker corner of the room. Orphan, by the hearth of thy parents, dost thou fear the presence of the dead!

And was Zanoni indeed about to quit Naples? Should she see him no more? Oh, fool, to think that there was grief in any other thought! The Past, that was gone! The Future! There was no Future to her—Zanoni absent! But this was the night of the third day on which Zanoni had told her that, come what might, he would visit her again. It was, then, if she might believe him, some appointed crisis in her fate; and how should she tell him of Glyndon's hateful words? The pure and the proud mind can never confide its wrongs to another, only its triumphs and its happiness. But at that late hour would Zanoni visit her—could she receive him? Midnight was at hand. Still in undefined suspense, in intense anxiety, she lingered in the room. The quarter before midnight sounded dull and distant. All was still, and she was about to pass to her sleeping-room, when she heard the hoofs of a horse at full speed; the sound ceased; there was a knock at the door. Her heart beat violently; but fear gave way to another sentiment when she heard a voice, too well known, calling on her name. She paused, and then, with the fearlessness of innocence, descended, and unbarred the door.

Zanoni entered with a light and hasty step. His horseman's cloak fitted tightly to his noble form; and his broad hat threw a gloomy shade over his commanding features.

The girl followed him into the room she had just left, trembling and blushing deeply, and stood before him with the lamp she held shining upward on her cheek, and the long hair that fell like a shower of light over the half-clad shoulders and heaving bust.

"Viola," said Zanoni, in a voice that spoke deep emotion, "I am by thy side once more to save thee. Not a moment is to be lost. Thou must fly with me, or remain the victim of the Prince di ——. I would have made the charge I now undertake another's; thou knowest I would—thou knowest it! But he is not worthy of thee, the cold Englishman! I throw myself at thy feet; have trust in me and fly."

He grasped her hand passionately as he dropped on his knee,

and looked up into her face with his bright beseeching eyes.

"Fly with thee!" said Viola, scarce believing her senses.

"With me. Name, fame, honor—all will be sacrificed if thou dost not."

"Then—then," said the wild girl falteringly, and turning aside her face; "then I am not indifferent to thee? Thou wouldst not give me to another?"

Zanoni was silent; but his breast heaved, his cheeks flushed, his eyes darted dark and impassioned fire.

"Speak!" exclaimed Viola, in jealous suspicion of his silence.

"Indifferent to me! No; but I dare not yet say that I love thee."

"Then what matters my fate?" said Viola, turning pale, and shrinking from his side; "Leave me—I fear no danger. My life, and therefore my honor, is in mine own hands."

"Be not so mad," said Zanoni. "Hark! do you hear the neigh of my steed? It is an alarum that warns us of the approaching peril. Haste, or you are lost!"

"Why dost thou care for me?" said the girl bitterly. "Thou hast read my heart; thou knowest that thou art become the lord of my destiny. But to be bound beneath the weight of a cold obligation; to be the beggar on the eyes of Indifference; to cast myself on one who loves me not; *that* were indeed the vilest sin of my sex. Ah, Zanoni, rather let me die!"

She had thrown back her clustering hair from her face while she spoke; and as she now stood, with her arms drooping mournfully, and her hands clasped together with the proud bitterness of her wayward spirit, giving new zest and charm to her singular beauty, it was impossible to conceive a sight more irresistible to the eye and the heart.

"Tempt me not to thine own danger—perhaps destruction!" exclaimed Zanoni, in faltering accents. "Thou canst not dream of what thou wouldst demand—come!" and, advancing, he wound his arm round her waist. "Come, Viola; believe at least in my friendship, my honor, my protection—"

"And not thy love," said the Italian, turning on him her reproachful eyes. Those eyes met his, and he could not withdraw from the charm of their gaze. He felt her heart throbbing beneath his own; her breath came warm upon his cheek. He trembled. *He!* the lofty, the mysterious Zanoni, who seemed to stand aloof from his race. With a deep and burning sigh, he murmured: "Viola, I love thee! Oh!" he continued, passionately, and releasing his hold, he threw himself

abruptly at her feet, "I no more command; as woman should be wooed, I woo thee. From the first glance of those eyes, from the first sound of thy voice, thou becamest too fatally dear to me. Thou speakest of fascination—it lives and it breathes in thee! I fled from Naples to fly from thy presence—it pursued me. Months, years passed, and thy sweet face still shone upon my heart. I returned, because I pictured thee alone and sorrowful in the world; and knew that dangers from which I might save thee were gathering near thee and around. Beautiful Soul, whose leaves I have read with reverence, it was for thy sake, thine alone, that I would have given thee to one who might make thee happier on earth than I can. Viola! Viola! thou knowest not—never canst thou know—how dear thou art to me!"

It is in vain to seek for words to describe the delight—the proud, the full, the complete, and the entire delight—that filled the heart of the Neapolitan. He whom she had considered too lofty even for love—more humble to her than those she had half despised! She was silent, but her eyes spoke to him; and then slowly, as aware, at last, that the human love had advanced on the ideal, she shrunk into the terrors of a modest and virtuous nature. She did not dare—she did not dream to ask him the question she had so fearlessly made to Glyndon; but she felt a sudden coldness—a sense that a barrier was yet between love and love. "Oh, Zanoni!" she murmured with downcast eyes, "ask me not to fly with thee; tempt me not to my shame. Thou wouldst protect me from others. Oh, protect me from thyself!"

"Poor orphan!" said he tenderly, "and canst thou think that I ask from thee one sacrifice—still less the greatest that woman can give to love? As my wife I woo thee, and by every tie, and by every vow that can hallow and endear affection. Alas, they have belied love to thee indeed, if thou dost not know the religion that belongs to it! They who truly love would seek, for the treasure they obtain, every bond that can make it lasting and secure. Viola, weep not, unless thou givest me the holy right to kiss away thy tears!"

And that beautiful face, no more averted, drooped upon his bosom; and as he bent down, his lips sought the rosy mouth: a long and burning kiss—danger—life—the world was forgotten! Suddenly Zanoni tore himself from her.

"Hearest thou the wind that sighs and dies away? As that wind, my power to preserve thee, to guard thee, to foresee the storm in thy skies, is gone. No matter. Haste, haste;

and may love supply the loss of all that it has dared to sacrifice! Come."

Viola hesitated no more. She threw her mantle over her shoulders, and gathered up her dishevelled hair; a moment, and she was prepared, when a sudden crash was heard below.

"Too late! Fool that I was—too late!" cried Zanoni, in a sharp tone of agony, as he hurried to the door. He opened it, only to be borne back by the press of armed men. The room literally swarmed with the followers of the ravisher, masked, and armed to the teeth.

Viola was already in the grasp of two of the myrmidons. Her shriek smote the ear of Zanoni. He sprang forward; and Viola heard his wild cry in a foreign tongue! She saw the blades of the ruffians pointed at his breast! She lost her senses; and when she recovered, she found herself gagged, and in a carriage that was driven rapidly, by the side of a masked and motionless figure. The carriage stopped at the portals of a gloomy mansion. The gates opened noiselessly; a broad flight of steps, brilliantly illumined, was before her. She was in the Palace of the Prince di ——.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Ma lasciamo, per Dio, Signore, orma
Di parlar d'ira, e di cantar di morte." *
—*Orl. Fur.*, canto xvii. xvii.

The young actress was led to, and left alone in, a chamber adorned with all the luxurious and half-Eastern taste that, at one time, characterized the palaces of the great seigneurs of Italy. Her first thought was for Zanoni. Was he yet living? Had he escaped unscathed the blades of the foe?—her new treasure—the new light of her life—her lord, at last her lover?

She had short time for reflection. She heard steps approaching the chamber; she drew back, but trembled not. A courage, not of herself, never known before, sparkled in her eyes, and dilated her stature. Living or dead, she would be faithful still to Zanoni! There was a new motive to the preservation of honor. The door opened, and the Prince entered, in the gorgeous and gaudy costume still worn at that time in Naples.

"Fair and cruel one," said he, advancing, with a half-sneer

* But leave me, I solemnly conjure thee, Signor, to speak of wrath, and to sing of death

upon his lip, "thou wilt not too harshly blame the violence of love." He attempted to take her hand as he spoke.

"Nay," said he, as she recoiled, "reflect that thou art now in the power of one that never faltered in the pursuit of an object less dear to him than thou art. Thy lover, presumptuous though he be, is not by to save thee. Mine thou art; but instead of thy master, suffer me to be thy slave."

"Prince," said Viola, with a stern gravity, "your boast is in vain. Your power! I am *not* in your power. Life and death are in my own hands. I will not defy; but I do not fear you. I feel—and in some feelings," added Viola, with a solemnity almost thrilling, "there is all the strength, and all the divinity, of knowledge—I feel that I am safe even here; but you—you, Prince di ——, have brought danger to your home and hearth!"

The Neapolitan seemed startled by an earnestness and boldness he was but little prepared for. He was not, however, a man easily intimidated or deferred from any purpose he had formed; and, approaching Viola, he was about to reply with much warmth, real or affected, when a knock was heard at the door of the chamber. The sound was repeated, and the Prince, chafed at the interruption, opened the door and demanded, impatiently, who had ventured to disobey his orders, and invade his leisure. Mascari presented himself, pale and agitated: "My lord," said he in a whisper, "pardon me; but a stranger is below, who insists on seeing you; and from some words he let fall, I judged it advisable even to infringe your commands."

"A stranger! And at this hour! What business can he pretend? Why was he even admitted?"

"He asserts that your life is in imminent danger. The source whence it proceeds he will relate to your Excellency alone."

The Prince frowned; but his color changed. He mused a moment, and then re-entering the chamber, and advancing towards Viola, he said:

"Believe me, fair creature, I have no wish to take advantage of my power. I would fain trust alone to the gentler authorities of affection. Hold yourself queen within these walls more absolutely than you have ever enacted that part on the stage. To-night, farewell! May your sleep be calm, and your dreams propitious to my hopes."

With these words he retired, and in a few moments Viola was surrounded by officious attendants, whom she at length, with some difficulty, dismissed; and refusing to retire to rest,

she spent the night in examining the chamber, which she found was secured, and in thoughts of Zanoni, in whose power she felt an almost preternatural confidence.

Meanwhile, the Prince descended the stairs, and sought the room into which the stranger had been shown.

He found the visitor wrapped from head to foot in a long robe—half gown, half mantle—such as was sometimes worn by ecclesiastics. The face of this stranger was remarkable! So sunburnt and swarthy were his hues, that he must, apparently, have derived his origin amongst the races of the furthest East. His forehead was lofty, and his eyes so penetrating, yet so calm in their gaze, that the Prince shrunk from them as we shrink from a questioner who is drawing forth the guiltiest secret of our hearts.

"What would you with me?" asked the Prince, motioning his visitor to a seat.

"Prince of ——," said the stranger, in a voice deep and sweet, but foreign in its accent; "son of the most energetic and masculine race that ever applied godlike genius to the service of Human Will, with its winding wickedness and its stubborn grandeur; descendant of the great Visconti, in whose chronicles lies the History of Italy in her palmy day, and in whose rise was the development of the mightiest intellect, ripened by the most restless ambition, I come to gaze upon the last star in a darkening firmament. By this hour to-morrow space shall know it not. Man, unless thy whole nature change, thy days are numbered!"

"What means this jargon?" said the Prince, in visible astonishment and secret awe. "Comest thou to menace me in my own halls, or wouldst thou warn me of a danger? Art thou some itinerant mountebank, or some unguessed-of friend? Speak out, and plainly. What danger threatens me?"

"Zanoni and thy ancestor's sword," replied the stranger.

"Ha! ha!" said the Prince, laughing scornfully, "I half suspected thee from the first. Thou art then the accomplice or the tool of that most dexterous, but, at present, defeated charlatan? And I suppose thou wilt tell me that, if I were to release a certain captive I have made, the danger would vanish, and the hand of the dial would be put back?"

"Judge of me as thou wilt, Prince di ——. I confess my knowledge of Zanoni. Thou, too, wilt know his power, but not till it consume thee. I would save, therefore I warn thee. Dost thou ask me why? I will tell thee. Canst thou remember to have heard wild tales of thy grandsire? Of his desire

for a knowledge that passes that of the schools and cloisters? Of a strange man from the East, who was his familiar and master in lore, against which the Vatican has, from age to age, launched its mimic thunder? Dost thou call to mind the fortunes of thy ancestor? How he succeeded in youth to little but a name? How, after a career wild and dissolute as thine, he disappeared from Milan, a pauper, and a self-exile? How, after years spent, none knew in what climes or in what pursuits, he again revisited the city where his progenitors had reigned? How with him came the wise man of the East, the mystic Mejnour? How they who beheld him, beheld with amaze and fear that time had ploughed no furrow on his brow; that youth seemed fixed, as by a spell, upon his face and form? Dost thou not know that from that hour his fortunes rose? Kinsmen the most remote died; estate upon estate fell into the hands of the ruined noble. He became the guide of princes, the first magnate of Italy. He founded anew the house of which thou art the last lineal upholder, and transferred his splendor from Milan to the Sicilian realms. Visions of high ambition were then present with him nightly and daily. Had he lived, Italy would have known a new dynasty, and the Visconti would have reigned over Magna-Græcia. He was a man such as the world rarely sees; but his ends, too earthly, were at war with the means he sought. Had his ambition been more or less, he had been worthy of a realm mightier than the Cæsars swayed; worthy of our solemn order; worthy of the fellowship of Mejnour, whom you now behold before you."

The Prince, who had listened with deep and breathless attention to the words of his singular guest, started from his seat at his last words. "Impostor!" he cried, "can you dare thus to play with my credulity? Sixty years have flown since my grandsire died; were he living, he had passed his hundred and twentieth year; and you, whose old age is erect and vigorous, have the assurance to pretend to have been his contemporary! But you have imperfectly learned your tale. You know not, it seems, that my grandsire, wise and illustrious indeed, in all save his faith in a charlatan, was found dead in his bed, in the very hour when his colossal plans were ripe for execution, and that Mejnour was guilty of his murder."

"Alas!" answered the stranger, in a voice of great sadness, "had he but listened to Mejnour; had he but delayed the last and most perilous ordeal of daring wisdom until the requisite training and initiation had been completed, your ancestor

would have stood with me upon an eminence which the waters of Death itself wash everlastingly, but cannot overflow. Your grandsire resisted my fervent prayers, disobeyed my most absolute commands, and in the sublime rashness of a soul that panted for secrets, which he who desires orbs and sceptres never can obtain, perished, the victim of his own frenzy."

"He was poisoned, and Mejnour fled."

"Mejnour fled not," answered the stranger proudly; "Mejnour could not fly from danger; for, to him, danger is a thing long left behind. It was the day before the Duke took the fatal draught which he believed was to confer on the mortal the immortal boon, that finding my power over him was gone, I abandoned him to his doom. But a truce with this; I loved your grandsire! I would save the last of his race. Oppose not thyself to Zanoni. Yield not thy soul to thine evil passions. Draw back from the precipice while there is yet time. In thy front and in thine eyes I detect some of that diviner glory which belonged to thy race. Thou hast in thee some germs of their hereditary genius, but they are choked up by worse than thy hereditary vices. Recollect that by genius thy house rose; by vice it ever failed to perpetuate its power. In the laws which regulate the Universe, it is decreed, that nothing wicked can long endure. Be wise, and let history warn thee. Thou standest on the verge of two worlds, the Past and the Future; and voices from either shriek omen in thy ear. I have done. I bid thee farewell!"

"Not so; thou shalt not quit these walls. I will make experiment of thy boasted power. What, ho there!—ho!"

The Prince shouted; the room was filled with his minions.

"Seize that man!" he cried, pointing to the spot which had been filled by the form of Mejnour. To his inconceivable amaze and horror, the spot was vacant. The mysterious stranger had vanished like a dream. But a thin and fragrant mist undulated, in pale volumes, round the walls of the chamber. "Look to my lord," cried Mascari. The Prince had fallen to the floor insensible. For many hours he seemed in a kind of trance. When he recovered he dismissed his attendants, and his step was heard in his chamber, pacing to and fro, with heavy and disordered strides. Not till an hour before his banquet the next day did he seem restored to his former self.

CHAPTER XV.

"Oime! come poss 'io
Altri trovar, se me trovar non posso?"*
—*Amint.*, At. i. Sc. ii.

The sleep of Glyndon, the night after his last interview with Zanoni, was unusually profound; and the sun streamed full upon his eyes, as he opened them to the day. He rose refreshed, and with a strange sentiment of calmness, that seemed more the result of resolution than exhaustion. The incidents and emotions of the past night had settled into distinct and clear impressions. He thought of them but slightly—he thought rather of the future. He was as one of the initiated in the old Egyptian mysteries, who have crossed the gate only to long more ardently for the penetralia.

He dressed himself, and was relieved to find that Mervale had joined a party of his countrymen on an excursion to Ischia. He spent the heat of noon in thoughtful solitude, and gradually the image of Viola returned to his heart. It was a holy—for it was a *human*—image. He had resigned her; and though he repented not, he was troubled at the thought that repentance would have come too late.

He started impatiently from his seat, and strode with rapid steps to the humble abode of the actress.

The distance was considerable, and the air oppressive. Glyndon arrived at the door breathless and heated. He knocked; no answer came. He lifted the latch and entered. He ascended the stairs; no sound, no sight of life met his ear and eye. In the front chamber, on a table, lay the guitar of the actress and some manuscript parts in the favorite operas. He paused, and summoning courage, tapped at the door which seemed to lead into the inner apartment. The door was ajar; and hearing no sound within, he pushed it open. It was the sleeping chamber of the young actress, that holiest ground to a lover; and well did the place become the presiding deity; none of the tawdry finery of the profession was visible, on the one hand; none of the slovenly disorder common to the humbler classes of the South, on the other. All was pure and simple; even the ornaments were those of an innocent refinement; a few books, placed carefully on shelves, a few half-faded flowers in an earthen vase, which was modelled and painted in the Etruscan fashion. The sunlight streamed over

* Alas! how can I find another, when I cannot find myself?

the snowy draperies of the bed, and a few articles of clothing on the chair beside it. Viola was not there; but the nurse! Was she gone also? He made the house resound with the name of Gionetta, but there was not even an echo to reply. At last, as he reluctantly quitted the desolate abode, he perceived Gionetta coming towards him from the street. The poor old woman uttered an exclamation of joy on seeing him; but to their mutual disappointment, neither had any cheerful tidings or satisfactory explanation to afford the other. Gionetta had been aroused from her slumber the night before by the noise in the rooms below; but, ere she could muster courage to descend, Viola was gone! She found the marks of violence on the door without; and all she had since been able to learn in the neighborhood, was, that a lazzarone, from his nocturnal resting-place on the Chiaja, had seen by the moonlight a carriage, which he recognized as belonging to the Prince di ——, pass and repass that road about the first hour of morning. Glyndon, on gathering, from the confused words and broken sobs of the old nurse, the heads of this account, abruptly left her and repaired to the palace of Zanoni. There he was informed that the Signor was gone to the banquet of the Prince di ——, and would not return till late. Glyndon stood motionless with perplexity and dismay; he knew not what to believe, or how to act. Even Mervale was not at hand to advise him. His conscience smote him bitterly. He had had the power to save the woman he had loved, and had foregone that power; but how was it that in this Zanoni himself had failed? How was it that he was gone to the very banquet of the ravisher? Could Zanoni be aware of what had passed? If not, should he lose a moment in apprising him? Though mentally irresolute, no man was more physically brave. He would repair at once to the palace of the Prince himself; and if Zanoni failed in the trust he had half appeared to arrogate, he, the humble foreigner, would demand the captive of fraud and force, in the very halls and before the assembled guests of the Prince di ——.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Ardua vallatur duris sapientia scrupis."*
—HADR. JUN., *Emblem.* xxxvii.

WE must go back some hours in the progress of this narrative. It was the first faint and gradual break of the summer

* Lofty wisdom is circled round with rugged rocks.

dawn ; and two men stood in a balcony overhanging a garden fragrant with the scents of the awakening flowers. The stars had not yet left the sky, the birds were yet silent on the boughs ; all was still, hushed, and tranquil ; but how different the tranquillity of reviving day from the solemn repose of night! In the music of silence there are a thousand variations. These men, who alone seemed awake in Naples, were Zanoni and the mysterious stranger, who had but an hour or two ago startled the Prince di —— in his voluptuous palace.

"No," said the latter ; "hadst thou delayed the acceptance of the Arch Gift until thou hast attained to the years, and passed through all the desolate bereavements, that chilled and seared myself, ere my researches had made it mine, thou wouldst have escaped the curse of which thou complainest now, thou wouldst not have mourned over the brevity of human affection as compared to the duration of thine own existence ; for thou wouldst have survived the very desire and dream of the love of woman. Brightest, and, but for that error, perhaps the loftiest, of the secret and solemn race that fills up the interval in creation between mankind and the children of the Empyreal, age after age wilt thou rue the splendid folly which made thee ask to carry the beauty and the passions of youth into the dreary grandeur of earthly immortality."

"I do not repent, nor shall I," answered Zanoni. "The transport and the sorrow, so wildly blended, which have at intervals diversified my doom, are better than the calm and bloodless tenor of thy solitary way. Thou, who lovest nothing, hatest nothing, feelest nothing; and walkest the world with the noiseless and joyless footsteps of a dream!"

"You mistake," replied he who had owned the name of Mejnour ; "though I care not for love, and am dead to every *passion* that agitates the sons of clay, I am not dead to their more serene enjoyments. I carry down the stream of the countless years, not the turbulent desires of youth, but the calm and spiritual delights of age. Wisely and deliberately I abandoned youth forever when I separated my lot from men. Let us not envy or reproach each other. I would have saved this Neapolitan, Zanoni (since so it now pleases thee to be called), partly because his grandsire was but divided by the last airy barrier from our own brotherhood, partly because I know that in the man himself lurk the elements of ancestral courage and power, which in earlier life would have fitted him for one of us. Earth holds but few to whom nature has given the qualities that can bear the ordeal! But time and excess,

that have thickened his grosser senses, have blunted his imagination. I relinquish him to his doom."

"And still, then, Mejnour, you cherish the desire to revive our order, limited now to ourselves alone, by new converts and allies; surely—surely—thy experience might have taught thee, that scarcely once in a thousand years is born the being who can pass through the horrible gates that lead into the worlds without. Is not thy path already strewed with thy victims? Do not their ghastly faces of agony and fear, the blood-stained suicide, the raving maniac, rise before thee, and warn what is yet left to thee of human sympathy from thy insane ambition?"

"Nay," answered Mejnour; "have I not had success to counterbalance failure? And can I forego this lofty and august hope, worthy alone of our high condition—the hope to form a mighty and numerous race with a force and power sufficient to permit them to acknowledge to mankind their majestic conquests and dominion; to become the true lords of this planet; invaders, perchance, of others; masters of the inimical and malignant tribes by which at this moment we are surrounded,—a race that may proceed, in their deathless destinies, from stage to stage of celestial glory, and rank at last amongst the nearest ministrants and agents gathered round the Throne of Thrones? What matter a thousand victims for one convert to our band? And you, Zanoni," continued Mejnour, after a pause—"you, even you, should this affection for a mortal beauty that you have dared, despite yourself, to cherish, be more than a passing fancy; should it, once admitted into your inmost nature, partake of its bright and enduring essence—even you may brave all things to raise the beloved one into your equal. Nay, interrupt me not. Can you see sickness menace her, danger hover around, years creep on; the eyes grow dim, the beauty fade, while the heart, youthful still, clings and fastens round your own,—can you see this, and know it is yours to—

"Cease!" cried Zanoni fiercely. "What is all other fate as compared to the death of terror? What, when the coldest sage, the most heated enthusiast, the hardiest warrior, with his nerves of iron, have been found dead in their beds, with straining eyeballs and horrent hair, at the first step of the Dread Progress,—thinkest thou that this weak woman, from whose cheek a sound at the window, the screech of the night-owl, the sight of a drop of blood on a man's sword, would start the color—could brave one glance of—Away! The very thought of such sights for her makes even myself a coward!"

"When you told her you loved her; when you clasped her to your breast, you renounced all power to foresee her future lot, or protect her from harm. Henceforth to her you are human, and human only. How know you, then, to what you may be tempted? How know you what her curiosity may learn and her courage brave? But enough of this—you are bent on your pursuit?"

"The fiat has gone forth."

"And to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, at this hour, our bark will be bounding over yonder ocean, and the weight of ages will have fallen from my heart! I compassionate thee, O foolish sage—*thou* hast given up *thy* youth!"

CHAPTER XVII.

ALCH. Thou always speakest riddles. Tell me if thou art that fountain of which Bernard Lord Trevizan writ?

MERC. I am not that fountain, but I am the water. The fountain compasseth me about.—SANDIVOGIUS, *New Light of Alchymy.*

THE Prince di —— was not a man whom Naples could suppose to be addicted to superstitious fancies. Still, in the south of Italy, there was then, and there still lingers, a certain spirit of credulity, which may, ever and anon, be visible amidst the boldest dogmas of their philosophers and sceptics. In his childhood the Prince had learned strange tales of the ambition, the genius, and the career of his grandsire, and secretly, perhaps influenced by ancestral example, in earlier youth he himself had followed science, not only through her legitimate course, but her antiquated and erratic windings. I have, indeed, been shown in Naples a little volume, blazoned with the arms of the Visconti, and ascribed to the nobleman I refer to, which treats of alchymy in a spirit half mocking and half reverential.

Pleasure soon distracted him from such speculations, and his talents, which were unquestionably great, were wholly perverted to extravagant intrigues, or to the embellishment of a gorgeous ostentation with something of classic grace. His immense wealth, his imperious pride, his unscrupulous and daring character, made him an object of no inconsiderable fear to a feeble and timid court; and the ministers of the indolent government willingly connived at excesses which allured him at least from ambition. The strange visit, and yet more strange departure, of Mejnour, filled the breast of the

Neapolitan with awe and wonder, against which all the haughty arrogance and learned scepticism of his maturer manhood combated in vain. The apparition of Mejnour served, indeed, to invest Zanoni with a character in which the Prince had not hitherto regarded him. He felt a strange alarm at the rival he had braved, at the foe he had provoked. When, a little before his banquet, he had resumed his self-possession, it was with a fell and gloomy resolution that he brooded over the perfidious schemes he had previously formed. He felt as if the death of the mysterious Zanoni were necessary for the preservation of his own life, and if at an earlier period of their rivalry he had determined on the fate of Zanoni, the warnings of Mejnour only served to confirm his resolve.

"We will try if his magic can invent an antidote to the bane," said he, half aloud, and with a stern smile, as he summoned Mascari to his presence. The poison which the Prince, with his own hands, mixed into the wine intended for his guest, was compounded from materials, the secret of which had been one of the proudest heirlooms of that able and evil race, which gave to Italy her wisest and guiltiest tyrants. Its operation was quick, yet not sudden: it produced no pain; it left on the form no grim convulsion, on the skin no purpling spot, to arouse suspicion; you might have cut and carved every membrane and fibre of the corpse, but the sharpest eyes of the leech would not have detected the presence of the subtle life-queller. For twelve hours the victim felt nothing, save a joyous and elated exhilaration of the blood—a delicious languor followed, the sure forerunner of apoplexy. No lancet then could save! Apoplexy had run much in the families of the enemies of the Visconti!

The hour of the feast arrived, the guests assembled. There were the flower of the Neapolitan *seignorie*, the descendants of the Norman, the Teuton, the Goth; for Naples had then a nobility, but derived it from the North, which has indeed been the *Nutrix Leonum*, the nurse of the lion-hearted chivalry of the world.

Last of the guests came Zanoni; and the crowd gave way as the dazzling foreigner moved along to the lord of the palace. The Prince greeted him with a meaning smile, to which Zanoni answered by a whisper: "He who plays with loaded dice does not always win."

The Prince bit his lip, and Zanoni, passing on, seemed deep in conversation with the fawning Mascari.

"Who is the Prince's heir?" asked the guest.

"A distant relation on the mother's side; with his Excellency dies the male line."

"Is the heir present at our host's banquet?"

"No; they are not friends."

"No matter; he will be here to-morrow!"

Mascari stared in surprise; but the signal for the banquet was given, and the guests were marshalled to the board. As was the custom then, the feast took place not long after mid-day. It was a long oval hall, the whole of one side opening by a marble colonnade upon a court or garden, in which the eye rested gratefully upon cool fountains and statues of whitest marble, half sheltered by orange trees. Every art that luxury could invent to give freshness and coolness to the languid and breezeless heat of the day without (a day on which the breath of the sirocco was abroad) had been called into existence. Artificial currents of air through invisible tubes, silken blinds waving to and fro as if to cheat the senses into the belief of an April wind, and miniature *jets d'eau* in each corner of the apartment, gave to the Italians the same sense of exhilaration and *comfort* (if I may use the word) which the well-drawn curtains and the blazing hearth afford to the children of colder climes.

The conversation was somewhat more lively and intellectual than is common amongst the languid pleasure-hunters of the South; for the Prince, himself accomplished, sought his acquaintance not only amongst the *beaux esprits* of his own country, but amongst the gay foreigners who adorned and relieved the monotony of the Neapolitan circles. There were present two or three of the brilliant Frenchmen of the old *régime*, who had already emigrated from the advancing revolution, and their peculiar turn of thought and wit was well calculated for the meridian of a society that made the *dolce far niente* at once its philosophy and its faith. The Prince, however, was more silent than usual; and when he sought to rouse himself, his spirits were forced and exaggerated. To the manners of his host, those of Zanoni afforded a striking contrast. The bearing of this singular person was at all times characterized by a calm and polished ease, which was attributed by the courtiers to the long habit of society. He could scarcely be called gay; yet few persons more tended to animate the general spirits of a convivial circle. He seemed, by a kind of intuition, to elicit from each companion the qualities in which he most excelled; and if occasionally a certain tone of latent mockery characterized his remarks upon the topics on which the conversation fell, it appeared to men who took nothing in earnest to be the

language both of wit and wisdom. To the Frenchmen in particular there was something startling in his intimate knowledge of the minutest events in their own capital and country, and his profound penetration (evinced but in epigrams and sarcasms) into the eminent characters who were then playing a part upon the great stage of Continental intrigue. It was while this conversation grew animated, and the feast was at its height, that Glyndon arrived at the palace. The porter, perceiving by his dress that he was not one of the invited guests, told him that his Excellency was engaged, and on no account could be disturbed ; and Glyndon then, for the first time, became aware how strange and embarrassing was the duty he had taken on himself. To force an entrance into the banquet hall of a great and powerful noble, surrounded by the rank of Naples, and to arraign him for what to his boon companions would appear but an act of gallantry, was an exploit that could not fail to be at once ludicrous and impotent. He mused a moment, and slipping a piece of gold into the porter's hand, said that he was commissioned to seek the Signor Zanoni upon an errand of life and death, and easily won his way across the court and into the interior building. He passed up the broad staircase, and the voices and merriment of the revellers smote his ear at a distance. At the entrance of the reception rooms he found a page, whom he despatched with a message to Zanoni. The page did the errand, and Zanoni, on hearing the whispered name of Glyndon, turned to his host :

" Pardon me, my lord ; an English friend of mine, the Signor Glyndon (not unknown by name to your Excellency) waits without—the business must indeed be urgent on which he has sought me in such an hour. You will forgive my momentary absence."

" Nay, Signor," answered the Prince courteously, but with a sinister smile on his countenance, " would it not be better for your friend to join us? An Englishman is welcome everywhere ; and even were he a Dutchman, your friendship would invest his presence with attraction. Pray his attendance ; we would not spare you even for a moment."

Zanoni bowed—the page was despatched with all flattering messages to Glyndon—a seat next to Zanoni was placed for him, and the young Englishman entered.

" You are most welcome, sir. I trust your business to our illustrious guest is of good omen and pleasant import. If you bring evil news, defer it, I pray you."

Glyndon's brow was sullen ; and he was about to startle the

guests by his reply, when Zanoni, touching his arm significantly, whispered in English: "I know why you have sought me. Be silent, and witness what ensues."

"You know, then, that Viola, whom you boasted you had the power to save from danger—"

"Is in this house! Yes. I know also that Murder sits at the right hand of our host. But his fate is now separated from hers forever; and the mirror which glasses it to my eye is clear through the steams of blood. Be still, and learn the fate that awaits the wicked!"

"My lord," said Zanoni, speaking aloud, "the Signor Glyndon has indeed brought me tidings, not wholly unexpected. I am compelled to leave Naples: an additional motive to make the most of the present hour."

"And what, if I may venture to ask, may be the cause that brings such affliction on the fair dames of Naples?"

"It is the approaching death of one who honored me with most loyal friendship," replied Zanoni gravely. "Let us not speak of it; grief cannot put back the dial. As we supply by new flowers those that fade in our vases, so it is the secret of worldly wisdom to replace by fresh friendships those that fade from our path."

"True philosophy!" exclaimed the Prince. "'*Not to admire*,' was the Roman's maxim; '*Never to mourn*,' is mine. There is nothing in life to grieve for, save, indeed, Signor Zanoni, when some young beauty on whom we have set our hearts, slips from our grasp. In such a moment we have need of all our wisdom, not to succumb to despair, and shake hands with death. What say you, Signor? You smile! Such never could be your lot. Pledge me in a sentiment: 'Long life to the fortunate lover—a quick release to the baffled suitor.'"

"I pledge you," said Zanoni. And as the fatal wine was poured into his glass, he repeated, fixing his eyes on the Prince: "I pledge you even in this wine!"

He lifted the glass to his lips. The Prince seemed ghastly pale while the gaze of his guest bent upon him, with an intent and stern brightness beneath which the conscience-stricken host cowered and quailed. Not till he had drained the draught, and replaced the glass upon the board, did Zanoni turn his eyes from the Prince; and he then said: "Your wine has been kept too long; it has lost its virtues. It might disagree with many, but do not fear; it will not harm me, Prince. Signor Mascari, you are a judge of the grape; will you favor us with your opinion?"

"Nay," answered Mascari, with well-affected composure, "I like not the wines of Cyprus; they are heating. Perhaps Signor Glyndon may not have the same distaste? The English are said to love their potations warm and pungent."

"Do you wish my friend also to taste the wine, Prince?" said Zanoni. "Recollect, all cannot drink it with the same impunity as myself."

"No," said the Prince hastily; "if you do not recommend the wine, Heaven forbid that we should constrain our guests! My Lord Duke," turning to one of the Frenchmen, "yours is the true soil of Bacchus. What think you of this cask from Burgundy? Has it borne the journey?"

"Ah," said Zanoni, "let us change both the wine and the theme."

With that, Zanoni grew yet more animated and brilliant. Never did wit more sparkling, airy, exhilarating, flash from the lips of reveller. His spirits fascinated all present—even the Prince himself, even Glyndon—with a strange and wild contagion. The former, indeed, whom the words and gaze of Zanoni, when he drained the poison, had filled with fearful misgivings, now hailed in the brilliant eloquence of his wit a certain sign of the operation of the bane. The wine circulated fast; but none seemed conscious of its effects. One by one the rest of the party fell into a charmed and spellbound silence, as Zanoni continued to pour forth sally upon sally, tale upon tale. They hung on his words, they almost held their breath to listen. Yet, how bitter was his mirth! How full of contempt for the triflers present, and for the trifles which made their life!

Night came on; the room grew dim, and the feast had lasted several hours longer than was the customary duration of similar entertainments at that day. Still the guests stirred not, and still Zanoni continued, with glittering eye and mocking lip, to lavish his stores of intellect and anecdote; when suddenly the moon rose, and shed its rays over the flowers and fountains in the court without, leaving the room itself half in shadow and half tinged by a quiet and ghostly light.

It was then that Zanoni rose.

"Well, gentlemen," said he, "we have not yet wearied our host, I hope; and his garden offers a new temptation to protract our stay. Have you no musicians among your train, Prince, that might regale our ears while we inhale the fragrance of your orange trees?"

"An excellent thought!" said the Prince. "Mascari, see to the music."

The party rose simultaneously to adjourn to the garden; and then for the first time, the effect of the wine they had drunk seemed to make itself felt.

With flushed cheeks and unsteady steps they came into the open air, which tended yet more to stimulate that glowing fever of the grape. As if to make up for the silence with which the guests had hitherto listened to Zanoni, every tongue was now loosened; every man talked, no man listened. There was something wild and fearful in the contrast between the calm beauty of the night and scene, and the hubbub and clamor of these disorderly roysters. One of the Frenchmen, in especial, the young Duc de R——, a nobleman of the highest rank, and of all the quick, vivacious, and irascible temperament of his countrymen, was particularly noisy and excited. And as circumstances, the remembrance of which is still preserved among certain circles of Naples, rendered it afterwards necessary that the Duc should himself give evidence of what occurred, I will here translate the short account he drew up, and which was kindly submitted to me some few years ago by my accomplished and lively friend, il Cavaliere di B——:

"I never remember," writes the Duc, "to have felt my spirits so excited as on that evening; we were like so many boys released from school, jostling each other as we reeled or ran down the flight of seven or eight stairs that led from the colonnade into the garden,—some laughing, some whooping, some scolding, some babbling. The wine had brought out, as it were, each man's inmost character. Some were loud and quarrelsome, others sentimental and whining; some whom we had hitherto thought dull, most mirthful; some whom we had ever regarded as discreet and taciturn, most garrulous and uproarious. I remember that in the midst of our clamorous gayety, my eye fell upon the cavalier, Signor Zanoni, whose conversation had so enchanted us all; and I felt a certain chill come over me to perceive that he wore the same calm and unsympathizing smile upon his countenance which had characterized it in his singular and curious stories of the Court of Louis XIV. I felt, indeed, half inclined to seek a quarrel with one whose composure was almost an insult to our disorder. Nor was such an effect of this irritating and mocking tranquillity confined to myself alone. Several of the party have told me since, that, on looking at Zanoni, they felt their blood yet more heated, and gayety change to resentment. There seemed in his icy smile a very charm to wound vanity and provoke

rage. It was at this moment that the Prince came up to me, and, passing his arm into mine, led me a little apart, from the rest. He had certainly indulged in the same excess as ourselves, but it did not produce the same effect of noisy excitement. There was, on the contrary, a certain cold arrogance and supercilious scorn in his bearing and language, which, even while affecting so much caressing courtesy towards me, roused my self-love against him. He seemed as if Zanoni had infected him; and in imitating the manner of his guest, he surpassed the original. He rallied me on some court gossip, which had honored my name by associating it with a certain beautiful and distinguished Sicilian lady, and affected to treat with contempt that which, had it been true, I should have regarded as a boast. He spoke, indeed, as if he himself had gathered all the flowers of Naples, and left us foreigners only the gleanings he had scorned. At this, my natural and national gallantry was piqued, and I retorted by some sarcasms that I should certainly have spared had my blood been cooler. He laughed heartily, and left me in a strange fit of resentment and anger. Perhaps (I must own the truth) the wine had produced in me a wild disposition to take offence and provoke quarrel. As the Prince left me, I turned, and saw Zanoni at my side.

"'The Prince is a braggart,' said he, with the same smile that displeased me before. 'He would monopolize all fortune and all love. Let us take our revenge.'

"'And how?'

"'He has, at this moment, in his house the most enchanting singer in Naples—the celebrated Viola Pisani. She is here, it is true, not by her own choice; he carried her hither by force, but he will pretend that she adores him. Let us insist on his producing this secret treasure, and when she enters, the Duc de R—— can have no doubt that his flatteries and attentions will charm the lady, and provoke all the jealous fears of our host. It would be a fair revenge upon his imperious self-conceit.'

"This suggestion delighted me. I hastened to the Prince. At that instant the musicians had just commenced; I waved my hand, ordered the music to stop, and addressing the Prince, who was standing in the centre of one of the gayest groups, complained of his want of hospitality in affording to us such poor proficients in the art, while he reserved for his own solace the lute and voice of the first performer in Naples. I demanded, half laughingly, half seriously, that he should produce the

Pisani. My demand was received with shouts of applause by the rest. We drowned the replies of our host with uproar, and would hear no denial. 'Gentlemen,' at last said the Prince, when he could obtain an audience, 'even were I to assent to your proposal, I could not induce the Signora to present herself before an assemblage as riotous as they are noble. You have too much chivalry to use compulsion with her, though the Duc de R—— forgets himself sufficiently to administer it to me.'

"I was stung by this taunt, however well deserved. 'Prince,' said I, 'I have for the indelicacy of compulsion so illustrious an example, that I cannot hesitate to pursue the path honored by your own footsteps. All Naples knows that the Pisani despises at once your gold and your love; that force alone could have brought her under your roof; and that you refuse to produce her, because you fear her complaints, and know enough of the chivalry your vanity sneers at to feel assured that the gentlemen of France are not more disposed to worship beauty than to defend it from wrong.'

"'You speak well, sir,' said Zanoni gravely. 'The Prince dares not produce his prize!'

"The Prince remained speechless for a few moments, as if with indignation. At last he broke out into expressions the most injurious and insulting against Signor Zanoni and myself. Zanoni replied not; I was more hot and hasty. The guests appeared to delight in our dispute. None, except Mascari, whom we pushed aside and disdained to hear, strove to conciliate; some took one side, some another. The issue may be well foreseen. Swords were called for and procured. Two were offered me by one of the party. I was about to choose one, when Zanoni placed in my hand the other, which, from its hilt, appeared of antiquated workmanship. At the same moment, looking towards the Prince, he said smilingly: 'The Duc takes your grandsire's sword. Prince, you are too brave a manf or superstition; you have forgot the forfeit!' Our host seemed to me recoil and turn pale at those words; nevertheless, he returned Zanoni's smile with a look of defiance. The next moment all was broil and disorder. There might be some six or eight persons engaged in a strange and confused kind of *mêlée*, but the Prince and myself only sought each other. The noise around us, the confusion of the guests, the cries of the musicians, the clash of our own swords, only served to stimulate our unhappy fury. We feared to be interrupted by the attendants, and fought like madmen, without skill or method. I

thrust and parried mechanically, blind and frantic as if a demon had entered into me, till I saw the Prince stretched at my feet, bathed in his blood, and Zanoni bending over him and whispering in his ear. That sight cooled us all. The strife ceased; we gathered in shame, remorse, and horror round our ill-fated host, but it was too late—his eyes rolled fearfully in his head. I have seen many men die, but never one who wore such horror on his countenance. At last, all was over! Zanoni rose from the corpse, and taking, with great composure, the sword from my hand, said calmly: 'Ye are witnesses, gentlemen, that the Prince brought his fate upon himself. The last of that illustrious house has perished in a brawl.'

"I saw no more of Zanoni. I hastened to our envoy to narrate the event, and abide the issue. I am grateful to the Neapolitan government, and to the illustrious heir of the unfortunate nobleman, for the lenient and generous, yet just, interpretation put upon a misfortune, the memory of which will afflict me to the last hour of my life.

(Signed)

"Louis Victor, Duc de R."

In the above memorial, the reader will find the most exact and minute account yet given of an event which created the most lively sensation at Naples in that day.

Glyndon had taken no part in the affray, neither had he participated largely in the excesses of the revel. For his exemption from both, he was perhaps indebted to the whispered exhortations of Zanoni. When the last rose from the corpse, and withdrew from that scene of confusion, Glyndon remarked that in passing the crowd he touched Mascari on the shoulder, and said something which the Englishman did not overhear. Glyndon followed Zanoni into the banquet-room, which, save where the moonlight slept on the marble floor, was wrapt in the sad and gloomy shadows of the advancing night.

"How could you foretell this fearful event? He fell not by your arm!" said Glyndon, in a tremulous and hollow tone.

"The general who calculates on the victory does not fight in person," answered Zanoni: "let the past sleep with the dead. Meet me at midnight by the sea-shore, half a mile to the left of your hotel. You will know the spot by a rude pillar—the only one near—to which a broken chain is attached. There and then, if thou wouldst learn our lore, thou shalt find the master. Go; I have business here yet. Remember, Viola is still in the house of the dead man!"

Here Mascari approached, and Zanoni, turning to the Italian, and waving his hand to Glyndon, drew the former aside. Glyndon slowly departed.

"Mascari," said Zanoni; "your patron is no more; your services will be valueless to his heir; a sober man, whom poverty has preserved from vice. For yourself, thank me that I do not give you up to the executioner; recollect the wine of Cyprus. Well, never tremble, man; it could not act on me, though it might re-act on others; in that it is a common type of crime. I forgive you; and if the wine should kill me, I promise you that my ghost shall not haunt so worshipful a penitent. Enough of this; conduct me to the chamber of Viola Pisani. You have no further need of her. The death of the gaoler opens the cell of the captive. Be quick, I would be gone."

Mascari uttered some inaudible words, bowed low, and led the way to the chamber in which Viola was confined.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MERC. Tell me, therefore, what thou seekest after, and what thou wilt have. What dost thou desire to make?

ALCH. The Philosopher's Stone.—SANDIVOGIUS.

IT wanted several minutes of midnight, and Glyndon repaired to the appointed spot. The mysterious empire which Zanoni had acquired over him was still more solemnly confirmed by the events of the last few hours; the sudden fate of the Prince, so deliberately foreshadowed, and yet so seemingly accidental, brought out by causes the most commonplace, and yet associated with words the most prophetic, impressed him with the deepest sentiments of admiration and awe. It was as if this dark and wondrous being could convert the most ordinary events and the meanest instruments into the agencies of his inscrutable will; yet if so, why have permitted the capture of Viola? Why not have prevented the crime, rather than punish the criminal? And did Zanoni really feel love for Viola? Love, and yet offer to resign her to himself; to a rival whom his arts could not have failed to baffle. He no longer reverted to the belief that Zanoni or Viola had sought to dupe him into marriage. His fear and reverence for the former now forbade the notion of so poor an imposture. Did he any longer love Viola himself? No; when that morning he had heard of her danger, he had, it is true,

returned to the sympathies and the fears of affection; but with the death of the Prince her image faded again from his heart, and he felt no jealous pang at the thought that she had been saved by Zanoni, that at that moment she was, perhaps, beneath his roof. Whoever has, in the course of his life, indulged the absorbing passion of the gamester, will remember how all other pursuits and objects vanished from his mind; how solely he was wrapped in the one wild delusion; with what a sceptre of magic power the despot-dæmon ruled every feeling and every thought. Far more intense than the passion of the gamester was the frantic, yet sublime, desire that mastered the breast of Glyndon. He would be the rival of Zanoni, not in human and perishable affections, but in preternatural and eternal lore. He would have laid down life with content, nay, rapture, as the price of learning those solemn secrets which separated the stranger from mankind. Enamoured of the goddess of goddesses, he stretched forth his arms—the wild Ixion—and embraced a cloud!

The night was most lovely and serene, and the waves scarcely rippled at his feet, as the Englishman glided on by the cool and starry beach. At length he arrived at the spot, and there, leaning against the broken pillar, he beheld a man wrapped in a long mantle, and in an attitude of profound repose. He approached and uttered the name of Zanoni. The figure turned, and he saw the face of a stranger; a face not stamped by the glorious beauty of Zanoni, but equally majestic in its aspect, and perhaps still more impressive from the mature age and the passionless depth of thought that characterized the expanded forehead, and deep-set but piercing eyes.

"You seek Zanoni," said the stranger, "he will be here anon; but, perhaps, he whom you see before you is more connected with your destiny, and more disposed to realize your dreams."

"Hath the earth then another Zanoni?"

"If not," replied the stranger, "why do you cherish the hope and the wild faith to be yourself a Zanoni? Think you that none others have burned with the same godlike dream? Who, indeed, in his first youth—youth when the soul is nearer to the heaven from which it sprung, and its divine and primal longings are not all effaced by the sordid passions and petty cares that are begot in time—who is there in youth that has not nourished the belief that the universe has secrets not known to the common herd, and panted, as the hart for the water-springs, for the fountains that lie hid and far away amidst the broad

wilderness of trackless science? The music of the fountain is heard in the soul *within*, till the steps, deceived and erring, rove away from its waters, and the wanderer dies in the mighty desert. Think you that none who have cherished the hope have found the truth? Or that the yearning after the Ineffable Knowledge was given to us utterly in vain? No! Every desire in human hearts is but a glimpse of things that exist, alike distant and divine. No! In the world there have been, from age to age, some brighter and happier spirits who have attained to the air in which the beings above mankind move and breathe. Zanoni, great though he be, stands not alone. He has had his predecessors, and long lines of successors may be yet to come."

"And will you tell me," said Glyndon, "that in yourself I behold one of that mighty few over whom Zanoni has no superiority in power and wisdom?"

"In me," answered the stranger, "you see one from whom Zanoni himself learned some of his loftiest secrets. On these shores, on this spot, have I stood in ages that your chroniclers but feebly reach. The Phœnician, the Greek, the Oscan, the Roman, the Lombard, I have seen them all!—leaves gay and glittering on the trunk of the universal life, scattered in due season and again renewed; till indeed, the same race that gave its glory to the ancient world bestowed a second youth upon the new. For the pure Greeks, the Hellenes, whose origin has bewildered your dreaming scholars, were of the same great family as the Norman tribe, born to be the lords of the universe, and in no land on earth destined to become the hewers of wood. Even the dim traditions of the learned, which bring the sons of Hellas from the vast and undetermined territories of northern Thrace to be the victors of the pastoral Pelasgi, and the founders of the line of demi-gods; which assign to a population bronzed beneath the suns of the West, the blue-eyed Minerva and the yellow-haired Achilles (physical characteristics of the North); which introduce amongst a pastoral people warlike aristocracies and limited monarchies, the feudalism of the classic time; even these might serve you to trace back the primeval settlements of the Hellenes to the same region whence, in later times, the Norman warriors broke on the dull and savage hordes of the Celt, and became the Greeks of the Christian world. But this interests you not, and you are wise in your indifference. Not in the knowledge of things without, but in the perfection of the soul within, lies the empire of man aspiring to be more than men."

"And what books contains that science? From what laboratory is it wrought?"

"Nature supplies the materials; they are around you in your daily walks. In the herbs that the beast devours and the chemist disdains to cull; in the elements, from which matter in its meanest and its mightiest shapes is deduced; in the wide bosom of the air; in the black abysses of the earth; everywhere are given to mortals the resources and libraries of immortal lore. But as the simplest problems in the simplest of all studies are obscure to one who braces not his mind to their comprehension, as the rower in yonder vessel cannot tell you why two circles can touch each other only in one point; so, though all earth were carved over and inscribed with the letters of diviner knowledge, the characters would be valueless to him who does not pause to inquire the language, and meditate the truth. Young man, if thy imagination is vivid, if thy heart is daring, if thy curiosity is insatiate, I will accept thee as my pupil. But the first lessons are stern and dread."

"If thou hast mastered them, why not I?" answered Glyndon boldly. "I have felt from my boyhood that strange mysteries were reserved for my career; and from the proudest ends of ordinary ambition, I have carried my gaze into the cloud and darkness that stretch beyond. The instant I beheld Zanoni, I felt as if I had discovered the guide and the tutor for which my youth had idly languished and vainly burned."

"And to me his duty is transferred," replied the stranger. "Yonder lies, anchored in the bay, the vessel in which Zanoni seeks a fairer home; a little while and the breeze will rise, the sail will swell, and the stranger will have passed, like a wind, away. Still, like the wind, he leaves in thy heart the seeds that may bear the blossom and the fruit. Zanoni hath performed his task, he is wanted no more; the perfecter of his work is at thy side. He comes! I hear the dash of the oar. You will have your choice submitted to you. According as you decide, we shall meet again." With these words the stranger moved slowly away, and disappeared beneath the shadow of the cliffs. A boat glided rapidly across the waters; it touched land; a man leapt on shore, and Glyndon recognized Zanoni.

"I give thee, Glyndon, I give thee no more the option of happy love and serene enjoyment. That hour is past, and fate has linked the hand that might have been thine own, to mine. But I have ample gifts to bestow upon thee, if thou wilt abandon the hope that gnaws thy heart, and the realiza-

tion of which, even *I* have not the power to foresee. Be thine ambition human, and I can gratify it to the full. Men desire four things in life: love, wealth, fame, power. The first I cannot give thee, the rest are at my disposal. Select which of them thou wilt, and let us part in peace."

"Such are not the gifts I covet. I choose knowledge, that knowledge must be thine own. For this, and for this alone, I surrendered the love of Viola; this, and this alone, must be my recompense."

"I cannot gainsay thee, though I can warn. The desire to learn does not always contain the faculty to acquire. I can give thee, it is true, the teacher—the rest must depend on thee. Be wise in time, and take that which I can assure to thee."

"Answer me but these questions, and according to your answer I will decide. Is it in the power of man to attain intercourse with the beings of other worlds? Is it in the power of man to influence the elements, and to ensure life against the sword and against disease?"

"All this may be possible," answered Zanoni evasively, "to the few. But for one who attains such secrets, millions may perish in the attempt."

"One question more. Thou—"

"Beware! Of myself, as I have said before, I render no account."

"Well, then, the stranger I have met this night, are his boasts to be believed? Is he in truth one of the chosen seers whom you allow to have mastered the mysteries I yearn to fathom?"

"Rash man," said Zanoni, in a tone of compassion, "thy crisis is past, and thy choice made! I can only bid thee be bold and prosper; yes, I resign thee to a master who *has* the power and the will to open to thee the gates of an awful world. Thy weal or woe are as nought in the eyes of his relentless wisdom. I would bid him spare thee, but he will heed me not. Mejnour, receive thy pupil!" Glyndon turned, and his heart beat when he perceived that the stranger, whose footsteps he had not heard upon the pebbles, whose approach he had not beheld in the moonlight, was once more by his side!

"Farewell," resumed Zanoni; "thy trial commences. When next we meet, thou wilt be the victim or the victor."

Glyndon's eyes followed the receding form of the mysterious stranger. He saw him enter the boat, and he then for the first time noticed that besides the rowers there was a female, who stood up as Zanoni gained the boat. Even at the distance

he recognized the once-adored form of Viola. She waved her hand to him, and across the still and shining air came her voice, mournfully and sweetly in her mother's tongue: "Farewell, Clarence—I forgive thee! Farewell, farewell!"

He strove to answer, but the voice touched a chord at his heart, and the words failed him. Viola was then lost forever; gone with this dread stranger; darkness was round her lot! And he himself had decided her fate and his own! The boat bounded on, the soft waves flashed and sparkled beneath the oars, and it was along one sapphire track of moonlight that the frail vessel bore away the lovers. Farther, and farther from his gaze, sped the boat, till at last the speck, scarcely visible, touched the side of the ship that lay lifeless in the glorious bay. At that instant, as if by magic, up sprang, with a glad murmur, the playful and freshening wind: and Glyndon turned to Mejnour and broke the silence.

"Tell me (if thou canst read the future), tell me that *her* lot will be fair, and that *her* choice at least is wise?"

"My pupil!" answered Mejnour, in a voice, the calmness of which well accorded with the chilling words, "thy first task must be to withdraw all thought, feeling, sympathy from others. The elementary stage of knowledge is to make self, and self alone, thy study and thy world. Thou hast decided thine own career; thou hast renounced love; thou hast rejected wealth, fame, and the vulgar pomps of power. What then are all mankind to thee? To perfect thy faculties, and concentrate thy emotions, is henceforth thy only aim!"

"And will happiness be the end?"

"If happiness exist," answered Mejnour, "it must be centred in a SELF to which all passion is unknown. But happiness is the last state of being; and as yet thou art on the threshold of the first."

As Mejnour spoke, the distant vessel spread its sails to the wind, and moved slowly along the deep. Glyndon sighed, and the pupil and the master retraced their steps towards the city.

BOOK IV.—THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD.

"Sey hinter ihm was will! Ich hëb ihn auf." *
—*Das verschleierte Bild zu Sais.*

CHAPTER I.

"Comme vittima io vengo all' ara." †—METAST., At. ii. Sc. 7.

IT was about a month after the date of Zanoni's departure, and Glyndon's introduction to Mejnour, when two Englishmen were walking, arm in arm, through the Toledo.

"I tell you," said one (who spoke warmly) "that if you have a particle of common-sense left in you, you will accompany me to England. This Mejnour is an impostor more dangerous, because more in earnest, than Zanoni. After all, what do his promises amount to? You allow that nothing can be more equivocal. You say that he has left Naples; that he has selected a retreat more congenial than the crowded thoroughfares of men to the studies in which he is to initiate you; and this retreat is among the haunts of the fiercest bandits in Italy—haunts which justice itself dares not penetrate. Fitting hermitage for a sage! I tremble for you. What if this stranger—of whom nothing is known—be leagued with the robbers; and these lures for your credulity bait but the traps for your property—perhaps your life? You might come off cheaply by a ransom of half your fortune. You smile indignantly! Well; put common-sense out of the question; take your own view of the matter. You are to undergo an ordeal which Mejnour himself does not profess to describe as a very tempting one. It may, or it may not, succeed; if it does not, you are menaced with the darkest evils; and if it does, you cannot be better off than the dull and joyless mystic whom you have taken for a master. Away with this folly; enjoy youth while it is left to you. Return with me to England; forget these dreams. Enter your proper career; form affections more respectable than those which lured you awhile to an Italian adventuress. Attend to your fortune, make money, and become a happy and distinguished man. This is the advice of sober friendship; yet the promises I hold out to you are fairer than those of Mejnour."

* Be behind what there may—I raise the veil.
† As a victim I go to the altar.

"Mervale," said Glyndon doggedly, "I cannot, if I would, yield to your wishes. A power that is above me urges me on; I cannot resist its influence. I will proceed to the last in the strange career I have commenced. Think of me no more. Follow yourself the advice you give to me, and be happy."

"This is madness," said Mervale; "your health is already failing; you are so changed I should scarcely know you. Come; I have already had your name entered in my passport; in another hour I shall be gone, and you, boy that you are, will be left without a friend, to the deceits of your own fancy and the machinations of this relentless mountebank."

"Enough!" said Glyndon coldly; "you cease to be an effective counsellor when you suffer your prejudices to be thus evident. I have already had ample proof," added the Englishman, and his pale cheek grew more pale, "of the power of this man—if man he be, which I sometimes doubt—and, come life, come death, I will not shrink from the paths that allure me. Farewell, Mervale. if we never meet again; if you hear, amidst our old and cheerful haunts, that Clarence Glyndon sleeps the last sleep by the shores of Naples, or amidst yon distant hills, say to the friends of our youth: 'He died worthily, as thousands of Martyr-students have died before him, in the pursuit of knowledge.'"

He wrung Mervale's hand as he spoke, darted from his side, and disappeared amidst the crowd.

By the corner of the Toledo he was arrested by Nicot.

"Ah, Glyndon! I have not seen you this month. Where have you hid yourself? Have you been absorbed in your studies?"

"Yes."

"I am about to leave Naples for Paris. Will you accompany me? Talent of all order is eagerly sought for there, and will be sure to rise."

"I thank you; I have other schemes for the present."

"So laconic! What ails you? Do you grieve for the loss of the Pisani? Take example by me. I have already consoled myself with Bianca Sacchini—a handsome woman—enlightened—no prejudices. A valuable creature I shall find her, no doubt. But as for this Zanoni!—"

"What of him?"

"If ever I paint an allegorical subject, I will take his likeness as Satan. Ha, ha! A true painter's revenge—eh? And the way of the world, too! When we can do nothing else against a man whom we hate, we can at least paint his effigies as the Devil's. Seriously, though: I abhor that man—"

"Wherefore?"

"Wherefore! Has he not carried off the wife and the dowry I had marked for myself? Yet, after all," added Nicot musingly, "had he served instead of injured me, I should have hated him all the same. His very form, and his very face, made me at once envy and detest him. I feel that there is something antipathetic in our natures. I feel, too, that we shall meet again, when Jean Nicot's hate may be less impotent. We, too, *cher confrère*—we, too, may meet again! *Vive la République!* I to my new world!—"

"And I to mine. Farewell!"

That day Mervale left Naples; the next morning Glyndon also quitted the City of Delight, alone, and on horseback. He bent his way into those picturesque, but dangerous, parts of the country, which at that time were infested by banditti, and which few travellers dared to pass, even in broad daylight, without a strong escort. A road more lonely cannot well be conceived than that on which the hoofs of his steed, striking upon the fragments of rock that encumbered the neglected way, woke a dull and melancholy echo. Large tracts of waste land, varied by the rank and profuse foliage of the South, lay before him; occasionally, a wild goat peeped down from some rocky crag, or the discordant cry of a bird of prey, startled in its sombre haunt, was heard above the hills. These were the only signs of life; not a human being was met, not a hut was visible. Wrapped in his own ardent and solemn thoughts, the young man continued his way, till the sun had spent its noon-day heat, and a breeze that announced the approach of eve sprung up from the unseen ocean which lay far distant to his right. It was then that a turn in the road brought before him one of those long, desolate, gloomy villages which are found in the interior of the Neapolitan dominions; and now he came upon a small chapel on one side of the road, with a gaudily painted image of the Virgin in the open shrine. Around this spot, which, in the heart of a Christian land, retained the vestige of the old idolatry (for just such were the chapels that in the pagan age were dedicated to the demon-saints of mythology), gathered six or seven miserable and squalid wretches, whom the Curse of the Leper had cut off from mankind. They set up a shrill cry as they turned their ghastly visages towards the horseman; and, without stirring from the spot, stretched out their gaunt arms, and implored charity in the name of the Merciful Mother! Glyndon hastily threw them some small coins, and, turning away his face, clapped spurs to his horse,

and relaxed not his speed till he entered the village. On either side the narrow and miry street, fierce and haggard forms, some leaning against the ruined walls of blackened huts, some seated at the threshold, some lying at full length in the mud, presented groups that at once invoked pity and aroused alarm: pity for their squalor, alarm for the ferocity imprinted on their savage aspects. They gazed at him, grim and sullen, as he rode slowly up the rugged street; sometimes whispering significantly to each other, but without attempting to stop his way. Even the children hushed their babble, and ragged urchins, devouring him with sparkling eyes, muttered to their mothers: "We shall feast well to-morrow?" It was, indeed, one of those hamlets in which Law sets not its sober step, in which Violence and Murder house secure—hamlets common then in the wilder parts of Italy—in which the peasant was but the gentler name for the robber.

Glyndon's heart somewhat failed him as he looked around, and the question he desired to ask died upon his lips. At length, from one of the dismal cabins emerged a form superior to the rest. Instead of the patched and ragged overall, which made the only garment of the men he had hitherto seen, the dress of this person was characterized by all the trappings of the national bravery. Upon his raven hair, the glossy curls of which made a notable contrast to the matted and elfin locks of the savages around, was placed a cloth cap with a gold tassel that hung down to his shoulder, his mustaches were trimmed with care, and a silk kerchief of gay hues was twisted round a well-shaped but sinewy throat; a short jacket of rough cloth was decorated with several rows of gilt filagree buttons; his nether garments fitted tight to his limbs, and were curiously braided; while in a broad, parti-colored sash were placed two silver-hilted pistols, and the sheathed knife, usually worn by Italians of the lower order, mounted in ivory elaborately carved. A small carbine of handsome workmanship was slung across his shoulder, and completed his costume. The man himself was of middle size, athletic, yet slender, with straight and regular features, sunburnt, but not swarthy; and an expression of countenance which, though reckless and bold, had in it frankness rather than ferocity, and, if defying, was not altogether unprepossessing.

Glyndon, after eyeing this figure for some moments with great attention, checked his rein, and asked the way to the "Castle of the Mountain."

The man lifted his cap as he heard the question, and,

approaching Glyndon, laid his hand upon the neck of the horse, and said, in a low voice, "Then you are the cavalier whom our patron the Signor expected. He bade me wait for you here, and lead you to the castle. And indeed, Signor, it might have been unfortunate if I had neglected to obey the command."

The man then, drawing a little aside, called out to the bystanders, in a loud voice: "Ho, ho! my friends, pay henceforth and forever all respect to this worshipful cavalier. He is the expected guest of our blessed patron of the Castle of the Mountain. Long life to him! May he, like his host, be safe by day and by night—on the hill and in the waste—against the dagger and the bullet—in limb and in life! Cursed be he who touches a hair of his head, or a baioccho in his pouch. Now and forever we will protect and honor him—for the law or against the law—with the faith, and to the death. Amen! Amen!"

"Amen!" responded, in wild chorus, a hundred voices; and the scattered and straggling groups pressed up the street, nearer and nearer to the horseman.

"And that he may be known," continued the Englishman's strange protector, "to the eye and to the ear, I place around him the white sash, and I give him the sacred watchword: '*Peace to the Brave.*' Signor, when you wear this sash, the proudest in these parts will bare the head and bend the knee. Signor, when you utter this watchword, the bravest hearts will be bound to your bidding. Desire you safety, or ask you revenge—to gain a beauty, or to lose a foe—speak but the word, and we are yours—we are yours! Is it not so, comrades?" And again the hoarse voices shouted, "Amen, Amen!"

"Now, Signor," whispered the bravo, "if you have a few coins to spare, scatter them amongst the crowd, and let us be gone."

Glyndon, not displeased at the concluding sentence, emptied his purse in the streets; and while, with mingled oaths, blessings, shrieks, and yells, men, women, and children scrambled for the money, the bravo, taking the rein of the horse, led it a few paces through the village at a brisk trot, and then, turning up a narrow lane to the left, in a few minutes neither houses nor men were visible, and the mountains closed their path on either side. It was then that, releasing the bridle and slackening his pace, the guide turned his dark eyes on Glyndon with an arch expression, and said:

"Your Excellency was not, perhaps, prepared for the hearty welcome we have given you."

"Why, in truth, I *ought* to have been prepared for it, since the Signor, to whose house I am bound, did not disguise from me the character of the neighborhood. And your name, my friend, if I may so call you?"

"Oh, no ceremonies with me, Excellency. In the village I am generally called Maêstro Páolo. I had a surname once, though a very equivocal one; and I have forgotten *that* since I retired from the world."

"And was it from disgust, from poverty, or from some—some ebullition of passion which entailed punishment, that you betook yourself to the mountains?"

"Why, Signor," said the bravo, with a gay laugh, "hermits of my class seldom love the confessional. However, I have no secrets while my step is in these defiles, my whistle in my pouch, and my carbine at my back." With that the robber, as if he loved permission to talk at his will, hemmed thrice, and began with much humor; though as his tale proceeded, the memories it roused seemed to carry him farther than he at first intended, and reckless and light-hearted ease gave way to that fierce and varied play of countenance and passion of gesture which characterize the emotions of his countrymen.

"I was born at Terracina—a fair spot, is it not? My father was a learned monk, of high birth; my mother—Heaven rest her!—an innkeeper's pretty daughter. Of course there could be no marriage in the case; and when I was born, the monk gravely declared my appearance to be miraculous. I was dedicated from my cradle to the altar; and my head was universally declared to be the orthodox shape for a cowl. As I grew up, the monk took great pains with my education; and I learned Latin and psalmody as soon as less miraculous infants learn crowing. Nor did the holy man's care stint itself to my interior accomplishments. Although vowed to poverty, he always contrived that my mother should have her pockets full: and, between her pockets and mine, there was soon established a clandestine communication; accordingly, at fourteen, I wore my cap on one side, stuck pistols in my belt, and assumed the swagger of a cavalier and a gallant. At that age my poor mother died; and about the same period, my father, having written a History of the Pontifical Bulls, in forty volumes, and being, as I said, of high birth, obtained a Cardinal's hat. From that time he thought fit to disown your humble servant. He bound

me over to an honest notary at Naples, and gave me two hundred crowns by way of provision. Well, Signor, I saw enough of the law to convince me that I should never be rogue enough to shine in the profession. So, instead of spoiling parchment, I made love to the notary's daughter. My master discovered our innocent amusement, and turned me out of doors; that was disagreeable. But my Ninetta loved me, and took care that I should not lie out in the streets with the lazzaroni. Little jade, I think I see her now, with her bare feet and her finger to her lips, opening the door in the summer nights, and bidding me creep softly into the kitchen, where, praised be the saints! a flask and a manchet always awaited the hungry *amoroso*. At last, however, Ninetta grew cold. It is the way of the sex, Signor. Her father found her an excellent marriage in the person of a withered old picture-dealer. She took the spouse, and very properly clapped the door in the face of the lover. I was not disheartened, Excellency; no, not I. Women are plentiful while we are young. So, without a ducat in my pocket, or a crust for my teeth, I set out to seek my fortune on board of a Spanish merchantman. That was duller work than I expected; but luckily we were attacked by a pirate; half the crew were butchered, the rest captured. I was one of the last—always in luck, you see, Signor—monks' sons have a knack that way! The captain of the pirates took a fancy to me. 'Serve with us?' said he. 'Too happy,' said I. Behold me, then, a pirate! O jolly life! How I blest the old notary for turning me out of doors! What feasting, what fighting, what wooing, what quarrelling! Sometimes we ran ashore and enjoyed ourselves like princes; sometimes we lay in a calm for days together on the loveliest sea that man ever traversed. And then, if the breeze rose and a sail came in sight, who so merry as we? I passed three years in that charming profession, and then, Signor, I grew ambitious. I caballed against the captain; I wanted his post. One still night we struck the blow. The ship was like a log in the sea, no land to be seen from the masthead, the waves like glass, and the moon at its full. Up we rose; thirty of us and more. Up we rose with a shout; we poured into the captain's cabin, I at the head. The brave old boy had caught the alarm, and there he stood at the doorway, a pistol in each hand; and his one eye (he had only one!) worse to meet than the pistols were.

"'Yield!' cried I, 'your life shall be safe.'

"'Take that,' said he, and whiz went the pistol; but the saints took care of their own, and the ball passed by my cheek,

and shot the boatswain behind me. I closed with the captain, and the other pistol went off without mischief in the struggle. Such a fellow he was—six feet four without his shoes! Over we went, rolling each on the other. Santa Maria! no time to get hold of one's knife. Meanwhile, all the crew were up, some for the captain, some for me; clashing and firing, and swearing and groaning, and now and then a heavy splash in the sea! Fine supper for the sharks that night! At last old Bilboa got uppermost; out flashed his knife; down it came, but not in my heart. No! I gave my left arm as a shield; and the blade went through to the hilt, with the blood spirting up like the rain from a whale's nostril! With the weight of the blow the stout fellow came down, so that his face touched mine; with my right hand I caught him by the throat, turned him over like a lamb, Signor, and faith it was soon all up with him—the boatswain's brother, a fat Dutchman, ran him through with a pike.

"'Old fellow,' said I, as he turned his terrible eye to me, 'I bear you no malice, but we must try to get on in the world, you know.' The captain grinned and gave up the ghost. I went upon deck—what a sight! Twenty bold fellows stark and cold, and the moon sparkling on the puddles of blood as calmly as if it were water. Well, Signor, the victory was ours, and the ship mine; I ruled merrily enough for six months. We then attacked a French ship twice our size. What sport it was! And we had not had a good fight so long, we were quite like virgins at it! We got the best of it, and won ship and cargo. They wanted to pistol the captain, but that was against my laws; so we gagged him, for he scolded as loud as if we were married to him; left him and the rest of his crew on board our own vessel, which was terribly battered; clapped our black flag on the Frenchman's, and set off merrily, with a brisk wind in our favor. But luck deserted us on forsaking our own dear old ship. A storm came on, a plank struck; several of us escaped in the boat; we had lots of gold with us, but no water! For two days and two nights we suffered horribly; but at last we ran ashore near a French seaport. Our sorry plight moved compassion, and as we had money we were not suspected—people only suspect the poor. Here we soon recovered our fatigues, rigged ourselves out gayly, and your humble servant was considered as noble a captain as ever walked deck. But now, alas, my fate would have it that I should fall in love with a silk-mercer's daughter. Ah, how I loved her!—the pretty Clara! Yes, I loved her so well, that I was seized with horror

at my past life! I resolved to repent, to marry her, and settle down into an honest man. Accordingly, I summoned my messmates, told them my resolution, resigned my command, and persuaded them to depart. They were good fellows; engaged with a Dutchman, against whom I heard afterwards they made a successful mutiny, but I never saw them more. I had two thousand crowns still left; with this sum I obtained the consent of the silk-mercer, and it was agreed that I should become a partner in the firm. I need not say that no one suspected that I had been so great a man, and I passed for a Neapolitan goldsmith's son instead of a cardinal's. I was very happy then, Signor, very—I could not have harmed a fly! Had I married Clara, I had been as gentle a mercer as ever handled a measure."

The bravo paused a moment, and it was easy to see that he felt more than his words and tone betokened. "Well, well, we must not look back at the past too earnestly—the sunlight upon it makes one's eyes water. The day was fixed for our wedding—it approached. On the evening before the appointed day, Clara, her mother, her little sister, and myself, were walking by the port, and as we looked on the sea I was telling them old gossip-tales of mermaids and sea-serpents, when a red-faced, bottle-nosed Frenchman clapped himself right before me, and placing his spectacles very deliberately astride his proboscis, echoed out: '*Sacré, mille tonnerres*, this is the damned pirate who boarded the *Niobe!*'

"'None of your jests,' said I mildly. 'Ho, ho!' said he; 'I can't be mistaken; help there!' and he griped me by the collar. I replied, as you may suppose, by laying him in the kennel; but it would not do. The French captain had a French lieutenant at his back, whose memory was as good as his chief's. A crowd assembled; other sailors came up; the odds were against me. I slept that night in prison; and in a few weeks afterwards, I was sent to the galleys. They spared my life, because the old Frenchman politely averred that I had made my crew spare his. You may believe that the oar and the chain was not to my taste. I and two others escaped; they took to the road, and have, no doubt, been long since broken on the wheel. I, soft soul, would not commit another crime to gain my bread, for Clara was still at my heart with her sweet eyes: so, limiting my rogueries to the theft of a beggar's rags, which I compensated by leaving him my galley attire instead, I begged my way to the town where I left Clara. It was a clear winter's day when I approached the outskirts of

the town. I had no fear of detection, for my beard and hair were as good as a mask. Oh, Mother of Mercy! there came across my way a funeral procession! There, now you know it; I can tell you no more. She had died, perhaps of love, more likely of shame. Can you guess how I spent that night—I stole a pickaxe from a mason's shed, and all alone and unseen, under the frosty heavens, I dug the fresh mould from the grave; I lifted the coffin, I wrenched the lid, I saw her again—again! Decay had not touched her. She was always pale in life! I could have sworn she lived! It was a blessed thing to see her once more, and all alone too! But then, at dawn, to give her back to the earth, to close the lid, to throw down the mould, to hear the pebbles rattle on the coffin—that was dreadful! Signor, I never knew before, and I don't wish to think now, how valuable a thing human life is. At sunrise I was again a wanderer; but now that Clara was gone, my scruples vanished, and again I was at war with my betters. I contrived at last, at O——, to get taken on board a vessel bound to Leghorn, working out my passage. From Leghorn I went to Rome, and stationed myself at the door of the cardinal's palace. Out he came, his gilded coach at the gate.

"'Ho, father!' said I; 'don't you know me?'

"'Who are you?'

"'Your son,' said I, in a whisper.

"The cardinal drew back, looked at me earnestly, and mused a moment. 'All men are my sons,' quoth he then, very mildly, 'there is gold for thee! To him who begs once, alms are due; to him who begs twice, jails are open. Take the hint, and molest me no more. Heaven bless thee!' With that he got into his coach, and drove off to the Vatican. His purse which he had left behind was well supplied. I was grateful and contented, and took my way to Terracina. I had not long passed the marshes, when I saw two horsemen approach at a canter.

"'You look poor, friend,' said one of them, halting; 'yet you are strong.'

"'Poor men and strong are both serviceable and dangerous, Signor Cavalier.'"

"'Well said; follow us.'

"I obeyed, and became a bandit. I rose by degrees; and as I have always been mild in my calling, and have taken purses without cutting throats, I bear an excellent character, and can eat my macaroni at Naples without any danger to life and limb. For the last two years I have settled in these parts, where I hold sway, and where I have purchased land. I am

called a farmer, Signor; and I myself now only rob for amusement, and to keep my hand in. I trust I have satisfied your curiosity. We are within a hundred yards of the castle."

"And how," asked the Englishman, whose interest had been much excited by his companion's narrative, "And how came you acquainted with my host? And by what means has he so well conciliated the good will of yourself and your friends?"

Maêstro Páolo turned his black eyes very gravely towards his questioner. "Why Signor," said he, "you must surely know more of the foreign cavalier with the hard name than I do. All I can say is, that about a fortnight ago I chanced to be standing by a booth in the Toledo at Naples, when a sober-looking gentleman touched me by the arm, and said, 'Maêstro Páolo, I want to make your acquaintance; do me the favor to come into yonder tavern, and drink a flask of lácrima.' 'Willingly,' said I. So we entered the tavern. When we were seated, my new acquaintance thus accosted me: 'The Count d'O—— has offered to let me hire his old castle near B——. You know the spot?'

"'Extremely well; no one has inhabited it for a century at least; it is half in ruins, Signor. A queer place to hire; I hope the rent is not heavy.'

"'Maêstro Páolo,' said he, 'I am a philosopher, and don't care for luxuries. I want a quiet retreat for some scientific experiments. The castle will suit me very well, provided you will accept me as a neighbor, and place me and my friends under your special protection. I am rich; but I shall take nothing to the castle worth robbing. I will pay one rent to the Count, and another to you.'

"With that we soon came to terms; and as the strange Signor doubled the sum I myself proposed, he is in high favor with all his neighbors. We would guard the old castle against an army. And now, Signor, that I have been thus frank, be frank with me. Who is this singular cavalier?"

"Who? He himself told you, a philosopher."

"Hem! Searching for the philosopher's stone,—eh? A bit of a magician; afraid of the priests?"

"Precisely. You have hit it."

"I thought so; and you are his pupil?"

"I am."

"I wish you well through it," said the robber seriously, and crossing himself with much devotion: "I am not much better than other people, but one's soul is one's soul. I do not mind a little honest robbery, or knocking a man on the head if need

be, but to make a bargain with the devil! Ah! take care, young gentleman, take care."

"You need not fear," said Glyndon, smiling; "my preceptor is too wise and too good for such a compact. But here we are, I suppose. A noble ruin—a glorious prospect!"

Glyndon paused delightedly, and surveyed the scene before and below with the eye of a painter. Insensibly, while listening to the bandit, he had wound up a considerable ascent, and now he was upon a broad ledge of rock covered with mosses and dwarf shrubs. Between this eminence and another of equal height upon which the castle was built, there was a deep but narrow fissure, overgrown with the most profuse foliage, so that the eye could not penetrate many yards below the rugged surface of the abyss; but the profoundness might be well conjectured by the hoarse, low, monotonous roar of waters unseen that rolled below, and the subsequent course of which was visible at a distance in a perturbed and rapid stream, that intersected the waste and desolate valleys. To the left, the prospect seemed almost boundless; the extreme clearness of the purple air serving to render distinct the features of a range of country that a conqueror of old might have deemed in itself a kingdom. Lonely and desolate as the road which Glyndon had passed that day had appeared, the landscape now seemed studded with castles, spires, and villages. Afar off, Naples gleamed whitely in the last rays of the sun, and the rose-tints of the horizon melted into the azure of her glorious bay. Yet more remote, and in another part of the prospect, might be caught, dim and shadowy, and backed by the darkest foliage, the ruined pillars of the ancient Posidonia. There, in the midst of his blackened and sterile realms, rose the dismal Mount of Fire; while, on the other hand, winding through variegated plains, to which distance lent all its magic, glittered many and many a stream, by which Etruscan and Sybarite, Roman and Saracen, and Norman, had, at intervals of ages, pitched the invading tent. All the visions of the past—the stormy and dazzling histories of southern Italy—rushed over the artist's mind as he gazed below. And then, slowly turning to look behind, he saw the gray and mouldering walls of the castle, in which he sought the secrets that were to give to hope in the Future a mightier empire than memory owns in the Past. It was one of those baronial fortresses with which Italy was studded in the earlier middle ages, having but little of the Gothic grace or grandeur which belongs to the ecclesiastical architecture of the same time; but rude, vast, and men-

acing, even in decay. A wooden bridge was thrown over the chasm, wide enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and the planks trembled and gave back a hollow sound as Glyndon urged his jaded steed across.

A road which had once been broad and paved with rough flags, but which now was half obliterated by long grass and rank weeds, conducted to the outer court of the castle hard by; the gates were open, and half the building in this part was dismantled; the ruins partially hid by ivy that was the growth of centuries. But on entering the inner court, Glyndon was nat sorry to notice that there was less appearance of neglect and decay; some wild roses gave a smile to the gray walls, and in the centre there was a fountain, in which the waters still trickled coolly, and with a pleasing murmur, from the jaws of a gigantic Triton. Here he was met by Mejnour with a smile.

"Welcome, my friend and pupil," said he; "he who seeks for Truth can find in these solitudes an immortal Academe."

CHAPTER II.

"And Abaris, so far from esteeming Pythagoras, who taught these things, a necromancer or wizard, rather revered and admired him as something divine."—IAMBLICH. *Vit. Pythag.*

THE attendants whom Mejnour had engaged for his strange abode were such as might suit a philosopher of few wants. An old Armenian, whom Glyndon recognized as in the mystic's service in Naples; a tall, hard-featured woman, from the village, recommended by Maêstro Páolo, and two long-haired, smooth-spoken, but fierce-visaged youths from the same place, and honored by the same sponsorship, constituted the establishment. The rooms used by the sage were commodious and weather-proof, with some remains of ancient splendor in the faded arras that clothed the walls, and the huge tables of costly marble and elaborate carving. Glyndon's sleeping apartment communicated with a kind of belvidere or terrace, that commanded prospects of unrivalled beauty and extent, and was separated on the other side by a long gallery, and a flight of ten or a dozen stairs, from the private chambers of the mystic. There was about the whole place a sombre and yet not displeasing depth of repose. It suited well with the studies to which it was now to be appropriated.

For several days Mejnour refused to confer with Glyndon on the subjects nearest to his heart.

"All without," said he, "is prepared, but not all within; your own soul must grow accustomed to the spot, and filled with the surrounding nature; for nature is the source of all inspiration."

With these words Mejnour turned to lighter topics. He made the Englishman accompany him in long rambles through the wild scenes around, and he smiled approvingly when the young artist gave way to the enthusiasm which their fearful beauty could not have failed to rouse in a duller breast; and then Mejnour poured forth to his wondering pupil the stores of a knowledge that seemed inexhaustible and boundless. He gave accounts the most curious, graphic, and minute, of the various races (their characters, habits, creeds, and manners), by which that fair land had been successively overrun. It is true, that his descriptions could not be found in books, and were unsupported by learned authorities; but he possessed the true charm of the tale-teller, and spoke of all with the animated confidence of a personal witness. Sometimes, too, he would converse upon the more durable and the loftier mysteries of Nature with an eloquence and a research which invested them with all the colors rather of poetry than science. Insensibly the young artist found himself elevated and soothed by the lore of his companion; the fever of his wild desires was slaked. His mind became more and more lulled into the divine tranquillity of contemplation; he felt himself a nobler being; and in the silence of his senses he imagined that he heard the voice of his soul.

It was to this state that Mejnour evidently sought to bring the neophyte, and in this elementary initiation the mystic was like every more ordinary sage. For he who seeks to DISCOVER must first reduce himself into a kind of abstract idealism, and be rendered up, in solemn and sweet bondage, to the faculties which CONTEMPLATE and IMAGINE.

Glyndon noticed that, in their rambles, Mejnour often paused where the foliage was rifest, to gather some herb or flower; and this reminded him that he had seen Zanoni similarly occupied. "Can these humble children of nature," said he one day to Mejnour, "things that bloom and wither in a day, be serviceable to the science of the higher secrets? Is there a pharmacy for the soul as well as the body, and do the nurslings of the summer minister not only to human health but spiritual immortality?".

"If," answered Mejnour, "a stranger had visited a wandering tribe before one property of herbalism was known to them;

if he had told the savages that the herbs, which every day they trampled under foot, were endowed with the most potent virtues; that one would restore to health a brother on the verge of death; that another would paralyze into idiocy their wisest sage; that a third would strike lifeless to the dust their most stalwart champion; that tears and laughter, vigor and disease, madness and reason, wakefulness and sleep, existence and dissolution, were coiled up in those unregarded leaves—would they not have held him a sorcerer or a liar? To half the virtues of the vegetable world mankind are yet in the darkness of the savages I have supposed. There are faculties within us with which certain herbs have affinity, and over which they have power. The moly of the ancients is not all a fable."

The apparent character of Mejnour differed in much from that of Zanoni; and while it fascinated Glyndon less, it subdued and impressed him more. The conversation of Zanoni evinced a deep and general interest for mankind; a feeling approaching to enthusiasm for Art and Beauty. The stories circulated concerning his habits elevated the mystery of his life by actions of charity and beneficence. And in all this, there was something genial and humane that softened the awe he created, and tended, perhaps, to raise suspicions as to the loftier secrets that he arrogated to himself. But Mejnour seemed wholly indifferent to all the actual world. If he committed no evil, he seemed equally apathetic to good. His deeds relieved no want, his words pitied no distress. What we call the heart appeared to have merged into the intellect. He moved, thought, and lived, like some regular and calm Abstraction, rather than one who yet retained, with the form, the feelings and sympathies of his kind!

Glyndon once, observing the tone of supreme indifference with which he spoke of those changes on the face of earth, which he asserted he had witnessed, ventured to remark to him the distinction he had noted.

"It is true," said Mejnour coldly. "My life is the life that contemplates, Zanoni's is the life that enjoys; when I gather the herb, I think but of its uses; Zanoni will pause to admire its beauties."

"And you deem your own the superior and the loftier existence?"

"No. His is the existence of youth, mine of age. We have cultivated different faculties. Each has powers the other cannot aspire to. Those with whom he associates live better; those who associate with me know more."

"I have heard, in truth," said Glyndon, that his companions at Naples were observed to lead purer and nobler lives after intercourse with Zanoni; yet were they not strange companions, at the best, for a sage? This terrible power, too, that he exercises at will, as in the death of the Prince di ——, and that of the Count Ughelli, scarcely becomes the tranquil seeker after good."

"True," said Mejnour, with an icy smile; "such must ever be the error of those philosophers who would meddle with the active life of mankind. You cannot serve some without injuring others; you cannot protect the good without warring on the bad; and if you desire to reform the faulty, why you must lower yourself to live with the faulty to know their faults. Even so saith Paracelsus, a great man, though often wrong.* Not mine this folly; I live but in knowledge—I have no life in mankind!"

Another time, Glyndon questioned the mystic as to the nature of that union or fraternity to which Zanoni had once referred.

"I am right, I suppose," said he, "in conjecturing that you and himself profess to be the brothers of the Rosy Cross?"

"Do you imagine," answered Mejnour, "that there were no mystic and solemn unions of men seeking the same end through the same means, before the Arabians of Damus, in 1378, taught to a wandering German the secrets which founded the Institution of the Rosicrucians? I allow, however, that the Rosicrucians formed a sect descended from the greater and earlier school. They were wiser than the Alchemists; their masters are wiser than they,"

"And of this early and primary order how many still exist?"

"Zanoni and myself."

"What, two only! And you profess the power to teach to all the secret that baffles Death?"

"Your ancestor attained that secret; he died rather than survive the only thing he loved. We have, my pupil, no arts by which we *can put Death out of our option*, or out of the will of Heaven. These walls may crush me as I stand. All that we profess to do is but this: to find out the secrets of the human frame, to know why the parts ossify and the blood stagnates, and to apply continual preventives to the effects of Time. This is not Magic; it is the Art of Medicine rightly understood. In our order we hold most noble, first, that

* "It is as necessary to know evil things as good, for who can know what is good without the knowing what is evil?" etc.—PARACELSUS, *De Nat. Rer.*, lib. 3.

knowledge which elevates the intellect ; secondly, that which preserves the body. But the mere art (extracted from the juices and simples) which recruits the animal vigor and arrests the progress of decay, or that more noble secret which I will only hint to thee at present, by which HEAT OR CALORIC, as ye call it, being, as Heraclitus wisely taught, the primordial principle of life, can be made its perpetual renovator,—these, I say, would not suffice for safety. It is ours also to disarm and elude the wrath of men, to turn the swords of our foes against each other, to glide (if not incorporeal) invisible to eyes over which we can throw a mist and darkness. And this some seers have professed to be the virtue of a stone of agate. Abaris placed it in his arrow. I will find you a herb in yon valley that will give a surer charm than the agate and the arrow. In one word, know this, that the humblest and meanest products of Nature are those from which the sublimest properties are to be drawn."

"But," said Glyndon, "if possessed of these great secrets, why so churlish in withholding their diffusion. Does not the false or charlatanic science differ in this from the true and indisputable—that the last communicates to the world the process by which it attains its discoveries ; the first boasts of marvellous results, and refuses to explain the causes ?"

"Well said, O Logician of the Schools ; but think again. Suppose we were to impart all our knowledge to all mankind, indiscriminately, alike to the vicious and the virtuous, should we be benefactors or scourges ? Imagine the tyrant, the sensualist, the evil and corrupted, being possessed of these tremendous powers ; would he not be a demon let loose on earth ? Grant that the same privilege be accorded also to the good ; and in what state would be society ? Engaged in a Titan war, the good forever on the defensive, the bad forever in assault. In the present condition of the earth, evil is a more active principle than good, and the evil would prevail. It is for these reasons that we are not only solemnly bound to administer our lore only to those who will not misuse and pervert it ; but that we place our ordeal in tests that purify the passions, and elevate the desires. And Nature in this controls and assists us : for it places awful guardians and insurmountable barriers between the ambition of vice and the heaven of the loftier science."

Such made a small part of the numerous conversations Mejnour held with his pupil—conversations that, while they appeared to address themselves to the reason, inflamed yet

more the fancy. It was the very disclaiming of all powers which Nature, properly investigated, did not suffice to create, that gave an air of probability to those which Mejnour asserted Nature might bestow.

Thus days and weeks rolled on; and the mind of Glyndon, gradually fitted to this sequestered and musing life, forgot at last the vanities and chimeras of the world without.

One evening he had lingered alone and late upon the ramparts, watching the stars as, one by one, they broke upon the twilight. Never had he felt so sensibly the mighty power of the heavens and the earth upon man! How much the springs of our intellectual being are moved and acted upon by the solemn influences of nature! As a patient on whom, slowly and by degrees, the agencies of mesmerism are brought to bear, he acknowledged to his heart the growing force of that vast and universal magnetism which is the life of creation, and binds the atom to the whole. A strange and ineffable consciousness of power, of the SOMETHING GREAT within the perishable clay, appealed to feelings at once dim and glorious, like the faint recognitions of a holier and former being. An impulse that he could not resist led him to seek the mystic. He would demand, that hour, his initiation into the worlds beyond our world; hewas prepared to breathe a diviner air. He entered the castle, and strode the shadowy and star-lit gallery which conducted to Mejnour's apartment.

CHAPTER III.

'Man is the eye of things."—EURYPH. *de Vit. Hum.*

"There is, therefore, a certain ecstatical or transporting power which, if at any time it shall be excited or stirred up by an ardent desire and most strong imagination, is able to conduct the spirit of the more outward, even to some absent and far-distant object."—VON HELMONT.

THE rooms that Mejnour occupied consisted of two chambers communicating with each other, and a third in which he slept. All these rooms were placed in the huge square tower that beetled over the dark and bush-grown precipice. The first chamber which Glyndon entered was empty. With a noiseless step he passed on, and opened the door that admitted into the inner one. He drew back at the threshold, overpowered by a strong fragrance which filled the chamber; a kind of mist thickened the air, rather than obscured it, for this vapor was not dark, but resembled a snow-cloud moving

slowly, and in heavy undulations, wave upon wave, regularly over the space. A mortal cold struck to the Englishman's heart, and his blood froze. He stood rooted to the spot; and as his eyes strained involuntarily through the vapor, he fancied (for he could not be sure that it was not the trick of his imagination) that he saw dim, spectre-like, but gigantic forms floating through the mist; or was it not rather the mist itself that formed its vapors fantastically into those moving, impalpable and bodiless apparitions? A great painter of antiquity is said, in a picture of Hades, to have represented the monsters that glide through the ghostly River of the Dead so artfully, that the eye perceived at once that the river itself was but a spectre, and the bloodless things that tenanted it had no life, their forms blending with the dead waters, till, as the eye continued to gaze, it ceased to discern them from the preternatural element they were supposed to inhabit. Such were the moving outlines that coiled and floated through the mist; but before Glyndon had even drawn breath in this atmosphere—for his life itself seemed arrested or changed into a kind of horrid trance—he felt his hand seized, and he was led from that room into the outer one. He heard the door close; his blood rushed again through his veins, and he saw Mejnour by his side. Strong convulsions then suddenly seized his whole frame; he fell to the ground insensible. When he recovered, he found himself in the open air, in a rude balcony of stone that jutted from the chamber; the stars shining serenely over the dark abyss below, and resting calmly upon the face of the mystic, who stood beside him with folded arms.

"Young man," said Mejnour, "judge by what you have just felt, how dangerous it is to seek knowledge until prepared to receive it. Another moment in the air of that chamber, and you had been a corpse."

"Then of what nature was the knowledge, that you, once mortal like myself, could safely have sought in that icy atmosphere which it was death for me to breathe? Mejnour," continued Glyndon, and his wild desire, sharpened by the very danger he had passed, once more animated and nerved him; "I am prepared, at least for the first steps. I come to you as, of old, the pupil to the Hierophant, and demand the initiation."

Mejnour passed his hand over the young man's heart—it beat loud, regularly, and boldly. He looked at him with something almost like admiration in his passionless and frigid features, and muttered, half to himself: "Surely, in so much courage the true disciple is found at last." Then, speaking

aloud, he added : "Be it so ; man's first initiation is in TRANCE. In dreams commences all human knowledge ; in dreams hovers over measureless space the first faint bridge between spirit and spirit—this world and the worlds beyond! Look steadfastly on yonder star !"

Glyndon obeyed, and Mejnour retired into the chamber ; from which there then slowly emerged a vapor, somewhat paler and of fainter odor than that which had nearly produced so fatal an effect on his frame. This, on the contrary, as it coiled around him, and then melted in thin spires into the air, breathed a refreshing and healthful fragrance. He still kept his eyes on the star, and the star seemed gradually to fix and command his gaze. A sort of languor next seized his frame, but without, as he thought, communicating itself to the mind ; and as this crept over him, he felt his temples sprinkled with some volatile and fiery essence. At the same moment, a slight tremor shook his limbs, and thrilled through his veins. The languor increased ; still he kept his gaze upon the star ; and now its luminous circumference seemed to expand and dilate. It became gradually softer and clearer in its light ; spreading wider and broader, it diffused all space—all space seemed swallowed up in it. And at last, in the midst of a silver shining atmosphere, he felt as if something burst within his brain, as if a strong chain were broken ; and at that moment a sense of heavenly liberty, of unutterable delight, of freedom from the body, of birdlike lightness, seemed to float him into the space itself. "Whom, now upon earth, dost thou wish to see?" whispered the voice of Mejnour. "Viola and Zanoni!" answered Glyndon, in his heart ; but he felt that his lips moved not. Suddenly at that thought—through this space, in which nothing save one mellow, translucent light had been discernible—a swift succession of shadowy landscapes seemed to roll : trees, mountains, cities, seas, glided along, like the changes of a phantasmagoria ; and at last, settled and stationary, he saw a cave by the gradual marge of an ocean shore—myrtles and orange trees clothing the gentle banks. On a height, at a distance, gleamed the white but shattered relics of some ruined heathen edifice ; and the moon, in calm splendor, shining over all, literally bathed with its light two forms without the cave, at whose feet the blue waters crept, and he thought that he even heard them murmur. He recognized both the figures. Zanoni was seated on a fragment of stone ; Viola, half reclining by his side, was looking into his face, which was bent down to her, and in her countenance was the expression of that per-

fect happiness which belongs to perfect love. "Wouldst thou hear them speak?" whispered Mejnour; and again, without sound, Glyndon inly answered, "Yes!" Their voices then came to his ear, but in tones that seemed to him strange; so subdued were they, and sounding, as it were, so far off, that they were as voices heard in the visions of some holier men, from a distant sphere.

"And how is it," said Viola, "that thou canst find pleasure in listening to the ignorant?"

"Because the heart is never ignorant; because the mysteries of the feelings are as full of wonder as those of the intellect. If at times thou canst not comprehend the language of my thoughts, at times, also, I hear sweet enigmas in that of thy emotions."

"Ah, say not so!" said Viola, winding her arm tenderly round his neck, and under that heavenly light her face seemed lovelier for its blushes. "For the enigmas are but love's common language, and love should solve them. Till I knew thee—till I lived with thee—till I learned to watch for thy footstep when absent—yet even in absence to see thee everywhere!—I dreamed not how strong and all-pervading is the connection between nature and the human soul! . . . .

"And yet," she continued, "I am now assured of what I at first believed, that the feelings which attracted me towards thee at first were not those of love. I know *that*, by comparing the Present with the Past; it was a sentiment then wholly of the mind or the spirit! I could not hear thee now say, 'Viola, be happy with another!'"

"And I could not now tell thee so! Ah, Viola, never be weary of assuring me that thou art happy!"

"Happy, while thou art so. Yet, at times, Zanoni, thou art so sad!"

"Because human life is so short; because we must part at last; because yon moon shines on when the nightingale sings to it no more! A little while, and thine eyes will grow dim, and thy beauty haggard, and these locks that I toy with now will be gray and loveless."

"And thou, cruel one!" said Viola touchingly. "I shall never see the signs of age in thee! But shall we not grow old together, and our eyes be accustomed to a change which the heart shall not share!"

Zanoni sighed! He turned away, and seemed to commune with himself.

Glyndon's attention grew yet more earnest.

"But were it so," muttered Zanoni; and then looking steadfastly at Viola, he said, with a half smile: "Hast thou no curiosity to learn more of the Lover thou once couldst believe the agent of the evil one?"

"None; all that one wishes to know of the beloved one, I know,—*that thou lovest me!*"

"I have told thee that my life is apart from others. Wouldst thou not seek to share it?"

"I share it now!"

"But were it possible to be thus young and fair forever, till the world blazes round us as one funeral pyre!"

"We shall be so, when we leave the world!"

Zanoni was mute for some moments, and at length he said: "Canst thou recall those brilliant and aerial dreams which once visited thee, when thou didst fancy that thou wert preordained to some fate aloof and afar from the common children of the earth!"

"Zanoni, the fate is found."

"And hast thou no terror of the future?"

"The future! I forget it! Time past, and present, and to come, reposes in thy smile. Ah, Zanoni, play not with the foolish credulities of my youth! I have been better and humbler since thy presence has dispelled the mist of the air. The Future! Well, when I have cause to dread it, I will look up to Heaven; and remember who guides our fate!"

As she lifted her eyes above, a dark cloud swept suddenly over the scene. It wrapt the orange trees, the azure ocean, the dense sands; but still the last images that it veiled from the charmed eyes of Glyndon were the forms of Viola and Zanoni. The face of the one rapt, serene, and radiant; the face of the other, dark, thoughtful, and locked in more than its usual rigidness of melancholy beauty and profound repose.

"Rouse thyself," said Mejnour, "thy ordeal has commenced! There are pretenders to the solemn science, who could have shown thee the absent; and prated to thee, in their charlatanic jargon, of the secret electricities and the magnetic fluid, of whose true properties they know but the germs and elements. I will lend thee the books of those glorious dupes, and thou wilt find, in the dark ages, how many erring steps have stumbled upon the threshold of the mighty learning, and fancied they had pierced the temple. Hermes, and Albert, and Paracelsus, I knew ye all; but, noble as ye were, ye were fated to be deceived. Ye had not souls of faith, and daring fitted for the destinies at which ye aimed! Yet Paracelsus—

modest Paracelsus—had an arrogance that soared higher than all our knowledge. Ho ! ho ! He thought he could make a race of men from chemistry ; he arrogated to himself the Divine gift—the breath of life.* He would have made men, and, after all, confessed that they could be but pigmies ! My art is to make men above mankind. But you are impatient of my digressions. Forgive me. All these men (they were great dreamers, as you desire to be) were intimate friends of mine. But they are dead and rotten. They talked of spirits, but they dreaded to be in other company than that of men. Like orators whom I have heard, when I stood by the Pnyx of Athens, blazing with words like comets in the assembly, and extinguishing their ardor-like holyday rockets when they were in the field. Ho ! ho ! Demosthenes, my hero-coward, how nimble were thy heels at Chæronea ! And thou art impatient still ! Boy, I could tell thee such truths of the Past as would make thee the luminary of schools. But thou lustest only for the shadows of the Future. Thou shalt have thy wish. But the mind must be first exercised and trained. Go to thy room, and sleep ; fast austerely ; read no books ; meditate, imagine, dream, bewilder thyself, if thou wilt. Thought shapes out its own chaos at last. Before midnight, seek me again ! "

CHAPTER IV.

" It is fit that we who endeavor to rise to an elevation so sublime, should study first to leave behind carnal affections, the frailty of the senses, the passions that belong to matter ; secondly, to learn by what means we may ascend to the climax of pure intellect, united with the powers above, without which never can we gain the lore of secret things, nor the magic that effects true wonders."—TRITEMIUS *on Secret Things and Secret Spirits.*

IT wanted still many minutes of midnight, and Glyndon was once more in the apartment of the mystic. He had rigidly observed the fast ordained to him ; and in the rapt and intense reveries into which his excited fancy had plunged him, he was not only insensible to the wants of the flesh—he felt above them.

Mejnour, seated beside his disciple, thus addressed him :

" Man is arrogant in proportion to his ignorance. Man's natural tendency is to egotism. Man in his infancy of knowledge thinks that all creation was formed for him. For several ages he saw in the countless worlds, that sparkle through space

* PARACELSUS, *De Nat. Rer.* lib. i.

like the bubbles of a shoreless ocean, only the petty candles, the household torches, that Providence had been pleased to light for no other purpose but to make the night more agreeable to man. Astronomy has corrected this delusion of human vanity: and man now reluctantly confesses that the stars are worlds, larger and more glorious than his own; that the earth on which he crawls is a scarce visible speck on the vast chart of creation. But in the small as in the vast, God is equally profuse of life. The traveller looks upon the tree, and fancies its boughs were formed for his shelter in the summer sun, or his fuel in the winter frosts. But in each leaf of these boughs the Creator has made a world; it swarms with innumerable races. Each drop of the water in yon moat is an orb more populous than a kingdom is of men. Everywhere, then, in this immense design, Science brings new life to light. Life is the one pervading principle, and even the thing that seems to die and putrify, but engenders new life, and changes to fresh forms of matter. Reasoning, then, by evident analogy, if not a leaf, if not a drop of water, but is, no less than yonder stars, a habitable and breathing world,—nay, if even man himself is a world to other lives, and millions and myriads dwell in the rivers of his blood, and inhabit man's frame as man inhabits earth, common sense (if your schoolmen had it) would suffice to teach that the circumfluent infinite which you call space—the boundless Impalpable which divides earth from the moon and stars—is filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life. Is it not a visible absurdity to suppose that Being is crowded upon every leaf, and yet absent from the immensities of space? The law of the Great System forbids the waste even of an atom; it knows no spot where something of life does not breathe. In the very charnel-house is the nursery of production and animation. Is that truth? Well, then, can you conceive that space which is the Infinite itself is alone a waste, is alone lifeless, is less useful to the one design of universal being than the dead carcass of a dog, than the peopled leaf, than the swarming globule? The microscope shows you the creatures on the leaf; no mechanical tube is yet invented to discover the nobler and more gifted things that hover in the illimitable air. Yet between these last and man is a mysterious and terrible affinity. And hence, by tales and legends, not wholly false nor wholly true, have arisen from time to time beliefs in apparitions and spectres. If more common to the earlier and simpler tribes than to the men of your duller age, it is but that, with the first, the senses are more

keen and quick. And as the savage can see or scent, miles away, the traces of the foe, invisible to the gross sense of the civilized animal, so the barrier itself between him and the creatures of the airy world is less thickened and obscured. Do you listen?"

"With my soul!"

"But first, to penetrate this barrier, the soul with which you listen must be sharpened by intense enthusiasm, purified from all earthlier desires. Not without reason have the so-styled magicians, in all lands and times, insisted on chastity and abstemious revery as the communicants of inspiration. When thus prepared, science can be brought to aid it; the sight itself may be rendered more subtle, the nerves more acute, the spirit more alive and outward, and the element itself—the air, the space—may be made, by certain secrets of the higher chemistry, more palpable and clear. And this, too, is not magic as the credulous call it; as I have so often said before, magic (or science that violates Nature) exists not; it is but the science by which Nature can be controlled. Now, in space there are millions of beings, not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalculæ unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtle, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer that clothes the spirit. Hence the Rosicrucian's lovely phantoms of sylph and gnome. Yet, in truth, these races and tribes differ more widely, each from each, than the Calmuck from the Greek—differ in attributes and powers. In the drop of water you see how the animalculæ vary, how vast and terrible are some of those monster-mites as compared with others. Equally so with the Inhabitants of the atmosphere: some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity; some hostile as fiends to men, others gentle as messengers between earth and heaven. He who would establish intercourse with these varying beings resembles the traveller who would penetrate into unknown lands. He is exposed to strange dangers and unconjectured terrors. *That intercourse once gained, I cannot secure thee from the chances to which thy journey is exposed.* I cannot direct thee to paths free from the wanderings of the deadliest foes. Thou must alone, and of thyself, face and hazard all. But if thou art so enamoured of life as to care only to live on, no matter for what ends, recruiting the nerves and veins with the alchemist's vivifying elixir, why seek these dangers from the intermediate tribes? Because the very elixir that pours a more glorious life into the frame, so sharpens the senses that those larvæ of the air become to

thee audible and apparent; so that, unless trained by degrees to endure the phantoms and subdue their malice, a life thus gifted would be the most awful doom man could bring upon himself. Hence it is that though the elixir be compounded of the simplest herbs, his frame only is prepared to receive it who has gone through the subtlest trials. Nay. some, scared and daunted into the most intolerable horror by the sights that burst upon their eyes at the first draught, have found the potion less powerful to save than the agony and travail of Nature to destroy. To the unprepared the elixir is thus but the deadliest poison. Amidst the dwellers of the threshold is ONE, too, surpassing in malignity and hatred all her tribe—one whose eyes have paralyzed the bravest, and whose power increases over the spirit precisely in proportion to its fear. Does thy courage falter?"

"Nay; thy words but kindle it."

"Follow me, then; and submit to the initiatory labors."

With that, Mejnour led him into the interior chamber, and proceeded to explain to him certain chemical operations, which, though extremely simple in themselves, Glyndon soon perceived were capable of very extraordinary results.

"In the remoter times," said Mejnour, smiling, "our brotherhood were often compelled to recur to delusions to protect realities; and, as dexterous mechanicians or expert chemists, they obtained the name of sorcerers. Observe how easy to construct is the Spectre Lion that attended the renowned Leonardo da Vinci!"

And Glyndon beheld with delighted surprise, the simple means by which the wildest cheats of the imagination can be formed. The magical landscapes in which Baptista Porta rejoiced; the apparent change of the seasons with which Albertus Magnus startled the Earl of Holland; nay, even those more dread delusions of the Ghost and Image with which the Necromancers of Heraclea woke the conscience of the Conqueror of Platæa *—all these, as the showman enchants some trembling children on a Christmas Eve with his lanthorn and phantasmagoria, Mejnour exhibited to his pupil.

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"And now laugh forever at magic! when these, the very tricks, the very sports and frivolities of science, were the very acts which men viewed with abhorrence; and Inquisitors and Kings rewarded with the rack and the stake."

"But the Alchemist's transmutation of metals—"

* Pausanias—see Plutarch.

"Nature herself is a laboratory in which metals, and all elements, are forever at change. Easy to make gold; easier, more commodious, and cheaper still, to make the pearl, the diamond, and the ruby. Oh, yes; wise men found sorcery in this, too; but they found no sorcery in the discovery, that by the simplest combination of things of every-day use they could raise a Devil that would sweep away thousands of their kind by the breath of consuming fire. Discover what will destroy life, and you are a great man! What will prolong it, and you are an impostor! Discover some invention in machinery that will make the rich more rich and the poor more poor, and they will build you a statue! Discover some mystery in art, that will equalize physical disparities, and they will pull down their own houses to stone you! Ha, ha, my pupil, such is the world Zanoni still cares for! You and I will leave this world to itself. And now that you have seen some few of the effects of science, begin to learn its grammar."

Mejnour then set before his pupil certain tasks, in which the rest of the night wore itself away.

CHAPTER V.

"Great travell hath the gentle Calidore,
And toyle endured . . . .
There on a day—
He chaunst to spy a sort of shepheard groomes,
Playing on pipes and caroling apace.
. . . . He, there, besyde
Saw a faire damzell."—SPENSER, *Faerie Queene*, cant. ix.

FOR a considerable period the pupil of Mejnour was now absorbed in labor dependent on the most vigilant attention, on the most minute and subtle calculation. Results astonishing and various rewarded his toils and stimulated his interest. Nor were these studies limited to chemical discovery, in which it is permitted me to say that the greatest marvels upon the organization of physical life seemed wrought by experiments of the vivifying influence of heat. Mejnour professed to find a link between all intellectual beings in the existence of a certain all-pervading and invisible fluid resembling electricity, yet distinct from the known operations of that mysterious agency—a fluid that connected thought to thought with the rapidity and precision of the modern telegraph, and the influence of this fluid, according to Mejnour, extended to the remotest past, that is to say, whenever and wheresoever man had thought. Thus, if

the doctrine were true, all human knowledge became attainable through a medium established between the brain of the individual inquirer and all the farthest and obscurest regions in the universe of ideas. Glyndon was surprised to find Mejnour attached to the abstruse mysteries which the Pythagoreans ascribed to the occult science of NUMBERS. In this last, new lights glimmered dimly on his eyes; and he began to perceive that even the power to predict, or rather to calculate, results, might by— *

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But he observed that the last brief process by which, in each of these experiments, the wonder was achieved, Mejnour reserved for himself, and refused to communicate the secret. The answer he obtained to his remonstrances on this head was more stern than satisfactory:

"Dost thou think," said Mejnour, "that I would give to the mere pupil, whose qualities are not yet tried, powers that might change the face of the social world? The last secrets are entrusted only to him of whose virtue the Master is convinced. Patience! It is labor itself that is the great purifier of the mind; and by degrees the secrets will grow upon thyself as thy mind becomes riper to receive them."

At last Mejnour professed himself satisfied with the progress made by his pupil. "The hour now arrives," he said, "when thou mayst pass the great but airy barrier; when thou mayest gradually confront the terrible Dweller of the Threshold. Continue thy labors; continue to suppress thine impatience for results until thou canst fathom the causes. I leave thee for one month; if at the end of that period, when I return, the tasks set thee are completed, and thy mind prepared by contemplation and austere thought for the ordeal, I promise thee the ordeal shall commence. One caution alone I give thee, regard it as a peremptory command: Enter not this chamber!" (They were then standing in the room where their experiments had been chiefly made, and in which Glyndon, on the night he had sought the solitude of the Mystic, had nearly fallen a victim to his intrusion.)

"Enter not this chamber till my return; or, above all, if by any search for materials necessary to thy toils, thou shouldst venture hither, forbear to light the naphtha in those vessels, and to open the vases on yonder shelves. I leave the key of the room in thy keeping, in order to try thy abstinence and self-control. Young man, this very temptation is a part of thy trial."

* Here there is an erasure in the MS.

With that, Mejnour placed the key in his hands; and at sunset he left the castle.

For several days Glyndon continued immersed in employments which strained to the utmost all the faculties of his intellect. Even the most partial success depended so entirely on the abstraction of the mind, and the minuteness of its calculations, that there was scarcely room for any other thought than those absorbed in the occupation. And doubtless this perpetual strain of the faculties was the object of Mejnour in works that did not seem exactly pertinent to the purposes in view. As the study of the elementary mathematics, for example, is not so profitable in the solving of problems, useless in our after-callings, as it is serviceable in training the intellect to the comprehension and analysis of general truths.

But in less than half the time which Mejnour had stated for the duration of his absence, all that the Mystic had appointed to his toils was completed by the Pupil; and then his mind, thus relieved from the drudgery and mechanism of employment, once more sought occupation in dim conjecture and restless fancies. His inquisitive and rash nature grew excited by the prohibition of Mejnour, and he found himself gazing too often, with perturbed and daring curiosity, upon the key of the forbidden chamber. He began to feel indignant at a trial of constancy which he deemed frivolous and puerile. What nursery tales of Bluebeard and his closet were revived to daunt and terrify him! How could the mere walls of a chamber, in which he had so often securely pursued his labors, start into living danger? If haunted, it could be but by those delusions which Mejnour had taught to despise. A shadowy lion, a chemical phantasm! Tush! He lost half his awe of Mejnour when he thought that by such tricks the sage could practise upon the very intellect he had awakened and instructed! Still he resisted the impulses of his curiosity and his pride, and, to escape from their dictation, he took long rambles on the hills, or amidst the valleys that surrounded the castle; seeking by bodily fatigue to subdue the unreposing mind. One day, suddenly emerging from a dark ravine, he came upon one of those Italian scenes of rural festivity and mirth in which the classic age appears to revive. It was a festival, partly agricultural, partly religious, held yearly by the peasants of that district. Assembled at the outskirts of a village, animated crowds, just returned from a procession to a neighboring chapel, were now forming themselves into groups—the old to taste the vintage, the young to dance, all to be

gay and happy. This sudden picture of easy joy and careless ignorance, contrasting so forcibly with the intense studies and that parching desire for wisdom which had so long made up his own life, and burned at his own heart, sensibly affected Glyndon. As he stood aloof and gazing on them, the young man felt once more that he was young. The memory of all he had been content to sacrifice spoke to him like the sharp voice of remorse. The flitting forms of the women in their picturesque attire, their happy laughter ringing through the cool, still air of the autumn noon, brought back to the heart, or rather perhaps to the senses, the images of his past time, the "golden shepherd hours," when to live was but to enjoy.

He approached nearer and nearer to the scene, and suddenly a noisy group swept round him; and Maêstro Páolo, tapping him familiarly on the shoulder, exclaimed, in a hearty voice: "Welcome, Excellency! We are rejoiced to see you amongst us." Glyndon was about to reply to this salutation, when his eyes rested upon the face of a young girl, leaning on Páolo's arm, of a beauty so attractive, that his color rose and his heart beat as he encountered her gaze. Her eyes sparkled with a roguish and petulant mirth, her parted lips showed teeth like pearls; as if impatient at the pause of her companion from the revel of the rest, her little foot beat the ground to a measure that she half hummed, half chanted. Páolo laughed as he saw the effect the girl had produced upon the young foreigner.

"Will you not dance, Excellency? Come, lay aside your greatness, and be merry, like us poor devils. See how our pretty Fillide is longing for a partner. Take compassion on her."

Fillide pouted at this speech; and, disengaging her arm from Páolo's, turned away, but threw over her shoulder a glance half inviting, half defying. Glyndon, almost involuntarily, advanced to her, and addressed her.

Oh yes, he addresses her! She looks down, and smiles. Páolo leaves them to themselves, sauntering off with a devil-me-carish air. Fillide speaks now, and looks up at the scholar's face with arch invitation. He shakes his head: Fillide laughs, and her laugh is silvery. She points to a gay mountaineer, who is tripping up to her merrily. Why does Glyndon feel jealous? Why, when she speaks again, does he shake his head no more? He offers his hand; Fillide blushes, and takes it with a demure coquetry. What! Is it so, indeed! They whirl into the noisy circle of the revellers. Ha! ha!

Is not this better than distilling herbs, and breaking thy brains on Pythagorean numbers? How lightly Fillide bounds along! How her lithesome waist supples itself to thy circling arm! Tara-ra-tara, ta-tara, rara-ra! What the devil is in the measure, that it makes the blood course like quicksilver through the veins? Was there ever a pair of eyes like Fillide's? Nothing of the cold stars there! Yet how they twinkle and laugh at thee! And that rosy, pursed-up mouth, that will answer so sparingly to thy flatteries, as if words were a waste of time, and kisses were their proper language. Oh, pupil of Mejnour! Oh, would-be Rosicrucian—Platonist—Magian—I know not what! I am ashamed of thee! What, in the names of Averroes, and Burri, and Agrippa, and Hermes, have become of thy austere contemplations? Was it for this thou didst resign Viola? I don't think thou hast the smallest recollection of the elixir or the cabala. Take care! What are you about, sir? Why do you clasp that small hand locked within your own? Why do you—Tara-rara tara-ra, tara-rara-ra, rarara, ta-ra a-ra! Keep your eyes off those slender ankles, and that crimson bodice! Tara-rara-ra? There they go again! And now they rest under the broad trees. The revel has whirled away from them. They hear—or do they not hear—the laughter at the distance? They see—or if they have their eyes about them, they *should* see—couple after couple, gliding by, love-talking and love-looking. But I will lay a wager, as they sit under that tree, and the round sun goes down behind the mountains, that they see or hear very little except themselves!

"Hollo, Signor Excellency! And how does your partner please you? Come and join our feast, Loiterers; one dances more merrily after wine."

"Down goes the round sun; up goes the autumn moon. Tara, tara, rarara, rarara, tarara-ra! Dancing again; is it a dance, or some movement gayer, noisier, wilder still? How they glance and gleam through the night-shadows—those flitting forms! What confusion! What order! Ha, that is the Tarantula dance; Maêstro Páolo foots it bravely! Diavolo, what fury! The tarantula has stung them all. Dance, or die; it is fury—the Corybantes—the Mænads—the— Ho, ho! More wine! The Sabbat of the Witches at Benevento is a joke to this! From cloud to cloud wanders the moon, now shining, now lost. Dimness while the maiden blushes; light when the maiden smiles.

"Fillide, thou art an enchantress!"

"*Buona notte*, Excellency; you will see me again!"

"Ah, young man," said an old, decrepit, hollow-eyed octogenarian, leaning on his staff, "make the best of your youth. I, too, once had a Fillide! I was handsomer than you then! Alas! if we could be always young!"

"Always young!" Glyndon started, as he turned his gaze from the fresh, fair, rosy face of the girl, and saw the eyes dropping rheum, the yellow wrinkled skin, the tottering frame of the old man.

"Ha, ha!" said the decrepit creature, hobbling near to him, and with a malicious laugh. "Yet I, too, was young once! Give me a baiocco for a glass of acqua vita!"

Tara, rara, ra-rara, tara, rara-ra! There dances Youth! Wrap thy rags round thee, and totter off, Old Age!

CHAPTER VI.

"Whilest Calidore does follow that faire mayd,
Unmindful of his vow and high beheast
Which by the Faerie Queene was on him layd."
—SPENSER, *Faerie Queene*, cant. x. 2.

It was that gray, indistinct, struggling interval between the night and the dawn, when Clarence stood once more in his chamber. The abstruse calculations lying on his table caught his eye, and filled him with a sentiment of weariness and distaste. But—"Alas, if we could be always young! Oh, thou horrid spectre of the old, rheum-eyed man! What apparition can the mystic chamber shadow forth more ugly and more hateful than thou? Oh, yes; if we could be always young! But not (thinks the neophyte now)—not to labor forever at these crabbed figures and these cold compounds of herbs and drugs. No; but to enjoy, to love, to revel! What should be the companion of youth but pleasure? And the gift of eternal youth may be mine this very hour! What means this prohibition of Mejnour's? Is it not of the same complexion as his ungenerous reserve even in the minutest secrets of chemistry, or the numbers of his cabala? Compelling me to perform all the toils, and yet witholding from me the knowledge of the crowning result? No doubt he will still, on his return, show me that the great mystery *can* be attained; but will still forbid *me* to attain it. Is it not as if he desired to keep my youth the slave to his age? To make me dependent solely on himself? To bind me to a journeyman's service by perpetual excitement

to curiosity, and the sight of the fruits he places beyond my lips ?." These, and many reflections still more repining, disturbed and irritated him. Heated with wine, excited by the wild revels he had left, he was unable to sleep. The image of that revolting Old Age which Time, unless defeated, must bring upon himself, quickened the eagerness of his desire for the dazzling and imperishable Youth he ascribed to Zanoni. The prohibition only served to create a spirit of defiance. The reviving day, laughing jocundly through his lattice, dispelled all the fears and superstitions that belong to night. The mystic chamber presented to his imagination nothing to differ from any other apartment in the castle. What foul or malignant apparition could harm him in the light of that blessed sun ! It was the peculiar, and on the whole most unhappy, contradiction in Glyndon's nature, that while his reasonings led him to doubt—and doubt rendered him in *moral* conduct irresolute and unsteady—he was *physically* brave to rashness. Nor is this uncommon : scepticism and presumption are often twins. When a man of this character determines upon any action, personal fear never deters him ; and for the moral fear, any sophistry suffices to self-will. Almost without analyzing himself the mental process by which his nerves hardened themselves and his limbs moved, he traversed the corridor, gained Mejnour's apartment, and opened the forbidden door. All was as he had been accustomed to see it, save that on a table in the centre of the room lay open a large volume. He approached, and gazed on the characters on the page ; they were in a cipher, the study of which had made a part of his labors. With but slight difficulty he imagined that he interpreted the meaning of the first sentences, and that they ran thus :

"To quaff the inner life, is to see the outer life ; to live in defiance of time, is to live in the whole. He who discovers the elixir, discovers what lies in space ; for the spirit that vivifies the frame strengthens the senses. There is attraction in the elementary principle of light. In the lamps of Rosicrusius, the fire is the pure elementary principle. Kindle the lamps while thou openest the vessel that contains the elixir, and the light attracts towards thee those beings whose life is that light. Beware of Fear : Fear is the deadliest enemy to Knowledge." Here the ciphers changed their character, and became incomprehensible. But had he not read enough ? Did not the last sentence suffice ? "Beware of Fear !" It was as if Mejnour

had purposely left the page open ; as if the trial was, in truth, the reverse of the one pretended ; as if the Mystic had designed to make experiment of his *courage* while affecting but that of his *forbearance*. Not Boldness, but Fear, was the deadliest enemy to Knowledge. He moved to the shelves on which the crystal vases were placed ; with an untrembling hand he took from one of them the stopper, and a delicious odor suddenly diffused itself through the room. The air sparkled as if with a diamond dust. A sense of unearthly delight, of an existence that seemed all spirit, flashed through his whole frame ; and a faint, low, but exquisite music crept, thrilling, through the chamber. At this moment he heard a voice in the corridor, calling on his name ; and presently there was a knock at the door without. "Are you there, Signor?" said the clear tones of Maêstro Páolo. Glyndon hastily reclosed and replaced the vial ; and bidding Páolo await him in his own apartment, tarried till he heard the intruder's step depart ; he then reluctantly quitted the room. As he locked the door, he still heard the dying strain of that fairy music ; and with a light step, and a joyous heart, he repaired to Páolo, inly resolving to visit again the chamber at an hour when his experiment would be safe from interruption.

As he crossed his threshold, Páolo started back, and exclaimed : "Why, Excellency, I scarcely recognize you ! Amusement I see is a great beautifier of the young. Yesterday you looked so pale and haggard ; but Fillide's merry eyes have done more for you than the philosopher's stone (Saints, forgive me for naming it !) ever did for the wizards." And Glyndon, glancing at the old Venetian mirror, as Páolo spoke, was scarcely less startled than Páolo himself at the change in his own mien and bearing. His form, before bent with thought, seemed to him taller by half the head, so lithesome and erect rose his slender stature ; his eyes glowed, his cheeks bloomed with health and the innate and pervading pleasure. If the mere fragrance of the elixir was thus potent, well might the alchemists have ascribed life and youth to the draught !

"You must forgive me, Excellency, for disturbing you," said Páolo, producing a letter from his pouch ; but our Patron has just written to me to say that he will be here to-morrow, and desired me to lose not a moment in giving to yourself this billet, which he enclosed."

"Who brought the letter?"

"A horseman, who did not wait for any reply."

Glyndon opened the letter, and read as follows :

"I return a week sooner than I had intended, and you will expect me to-morrow. You will then enter on the ordeal you desire; but remember that, in doing so, you must reduce Being as far as possible into Mind. The senses must be mortified and subdued, not the whisper of one passion heard. Thou mayst be master of the Cabala and the Chemistry; but thou must be master also over the Flesh and the Blood—over Love and Vanity, Ambition and Hate. I will trust to find thee so. Fast and meditate till we meet!"

Glyndon crumpled the letter in his hand with a smile of disdain. What! more drudgery, more abstinence! Youth without love and pleasure! Ha, ha! baffled Mejnour, thy pupil shall gain thy secrets without thine aid!

"And Fillide! I passed her cottage in my way—she blushed and sighed when I jested her about you, Excellency!"

"Well, Páolo! I thank thee for so charming an introduction. Thine must be a rare life."

"Ah, Excellency, while we are young, nothing like adventure—except love, wine, and laughter!"

"Very true. Farewell Maêstro Páolo; we will talk more with each other in a few days."

All that morning Glyndon was almost overpowered with the new sentiment of happiness that had entered into him. He roamed into the woods, and he felt a pleasure that resembled his earlier life of an artist, but a pleasure yet more subtle and vivid, in the various colors of the autumn foliage. Certainly, Nature seemed to be brought closer to him; he comprehended better all that Mejnour had often preached to him of the mystery of sympathies and attractions. He was about to enter into the same law as those mute children of the forests! He was to know the *renewal of life;* the seasons that chilled to winter should yet bring again the bloom and the mirth of spring. Man's common existence is as one year to the vegetable world: he has his spring, his summer, his autumn, and winter—but only *once.* But the giant oaks around him go through a revolving series of verdure and youth, and the green of the centenarian is as vivid in the beams of May as that of the sapling by its side. "Mine shall be your spring, but not your winter!" exclaimed the Aspirant.

Wrapt in these sanguine and joyous reveries, Glyndon, quitting the woods, found himself amidst cultivated fields and vineyards to which his footstep had not before wandered: and there stood, by the skirts of a green lane that reminded him of

verdant England, a modest house—half cottage, half farm. The door was open, and he saw a girl at work with her distaff. She looked up, uttered a slight cry, and, tripping gayly into the lane to his side, he recognized the dark-eyed Fillide.

"Hist!" she said, archly putting her finger to her lip; "do not speak loud—my mother is asleep within; and I knew you would come to see me. It is kind!"

Glyndon, with a little embarrassment, accepted the compliment to his kindness, which he did not exactly deserve. "You have thought, then, of me, fair Fillide?"

"Yes," answered the girl coloring, but with that frank, bold ingenuousness which characterizes the females of Italy, especially of the lower class, and in the southern provinces: "Oh yes! I have thought of little else. Páolo said he knew you would visit me."

"And what relation is Páolo to you?"

"None; but a good friend to us all. My brother is one of his band."

"One of his band! A robber?"

"We, of the mountains, do not call a mountaineer 'a robber,' Signor."

"I ask pardon. Do you not tremble sometimes for your brother's life? The law—"

"Law never ventures into these defiles. Tremble for him! No. My father and grandsire were of the same calling. I often wish I were a man!"

"By these lips, I am enchanted that your wish cannot be realized!"

"Fie, Signor! And do you really love me?"

"With my whole heart!"

"And I thee!" said the girl, with a candor that seemed innocent, as she suffered him to clasp her hand.

"But," she added, "thou wilt soon leave us; and I—" She stopped short, and the tears stood in her eyes.

There was something dangerous in this, it must be confessed. Certainly Fillide had not the seraphic loveliness of Viola; but hers was a beauty that equally at least touched the senses. Perhaps Glyndon had never really loved Viola; perhaps the feelings with which she had inspired him were not of that ardent character which deserves the name of love. However that be, he thought as he gazed on those dark eyes that he had never loved before.

"And couldst thou not leave thy mountains?" he whispered, as he drew yet nearer to her.

"Dost thou ask me?" she said, retreating, and looking him steadfastly in the face. "Dost thou know what we daughters of the mountains are? You gay, smooth cavaliers of cities seldom mean what you speak. With you, love is amusement; with us, it is life. Leave these mountains! Well! I should not leave my nature."

"Keep thy nature ever, it is a sweet one."

"Yes, sweet while thou art true; stern, if thou art faithless. Shall I tell thee what I—what the girls of this country, are? Daughters of men whom you call robbers, we aspire to be the companions of our lovers or our husbands. We love ardently, we own it boldly. We stand by your side in danger; we serve you as slaves in safety; we never change, and we resent change. You may reproach, strike us, trample us as a dog—we bear all without a murmur; betray us, and no tiger is more relentless. Be true, and our hearts reward you; be false, and our hands revenge! Dost thou love me now?"

During this speech the Italian's countenance had most eloquently aided her words, by turns soft, frank, fierce, and, at the last question, she inclined her head humbly, and stood, as in fear of his reply, before him. The stern, brave, wild spirit, in which what seemed unfeminine was yet, if I may so say, still womanly, did not recoil, it rather captivated, Glyndon. He answered readily, briefly, and freely: "Fillide, yes!"

Oh, "yes!" forsooth, Clarence Glyndon! Every light nature answers "yes" lightly to such a question from lips so rosy! Have a care, have a care! Why the deuce, Mejnour, do you leave your pupil of four-and-twenty to the mercy of these wild cats-a-mountain! Preach fast, and abstinence, and sublime renunciation of the cheats of the senses! Very well in you, sir, heaven knows how many ages old! But, at four-and-twenty, your Hierophant would have kept you out of Fillide's way, or you would have had small taste for the Cabala!

And so they stood, and talked, and vowed, and whispered, till the girl's mother made some noise within the house, and Fillide bounded back to the distaff, her finger once more on her lip.

"There is more magic in Fillide than in Mejnour," said Glyndon to himself, walking gayly home; "yet, on second thoughts, I know not if I quite so well like a character so ready for revenge! But he who has the real secret can baffle even the vengeance of a woman, and disarm all danger!"

Sirrah, dost thou even already meditate the possibility of treason? Oh, well said Zanoni, "to pour pure water into the muddy well does but disturb the mud!"

CHAPTER VII.

"Cernis, custodia qualis
Vestibulo sedeat? facies quæ limina servet?" *
—*Æneid*, lib. vi. 574.

And it is profound night. All is at rest within the old castle, all is breathless under the melancholy stars. Now is the time. Mejnour with his austere wisdom—Mejnour, the enemy to love—Mejnour, whose eye will read thy heart, and refuse thee the promised secrets, because the sunny face of Fillide disturbs the lifeless shadow that he calls repose—Mejnour comes to-morrow! Seize the night! Beware of fear! Never, or this hour! So, brave youth—brave despite all thy errors—so, with a steady pulse, thy hand unlocks once more the forbidden door!

He placed his lamp on the table beside the book, which still lay there opened; he turned over the leaves, but could not decipher their meaning till he came to the following passage:

"When, then, the pupil is thus initiated and prepared, let him open the casement, light the lamps, and bathe his temples with the elixir. He must beware how he presume yet to quaff the volatile and fiery spirit. To taste till repeated inhalations have accustomed the frame gradually to the ecstatic liquid, is to know not life but death."

He could penetrate no farther into the instructions; the cipher again changed. He now looked steadily and earnestly round the chamber. The moonlight came quietly through the lattice as his hand opened it, and seemed, as it rested on the floor and filled the walls, like the presence of some ghostly and mournful Power. He ranged the mystic lamps (nine in number), round the centre of the room, and lighted them one by one. A flame of silvery and azure tints sprung up from each, and lighted the apartment with a calm and yet most dazzling splendor; but presently this light grew more soft and dim, as a thin gray cloud, like a mist, gradually spread over the room; and an icy thrill shot through the heart of the Englishman, and quickly gathered over him like the coldness of death. Instinctively aware of his danger, he tottered, though with difficulty, for his limbs seemed rigid and stone-like, to the shelf that contained the crystal vials; hastily he inhaled the spirit, and laved his temples with the sparkling liquid. The same sensation of vigor, and youth, and joy, and airy lightness, that

* See you, what porter sits within the vestibule? What face watches at the threshold?

he had felt in the morning, instantaneously replaced the deadly numbness that just before had invaded the citadel of life. He stood, with his arms folded on his bosom, erect and dauntless, to watch what should ensue.

The vapor had now assumed almost the thickness and seeming consistency of a snow-cloud; the lamps piercing it like stars. And now he distinctly saw shapes, somewhat resembling in outline those of the human form, gliding slowly and with regular evolutions, through the cloud. They appeared bloodless; their bodies were transparent, and contracted or expanded, like the folds of a serpent. As they moved in majestic order, he heard a low sound—the ghost as it were of voice—which each caught and echoed from each other; a low sound, but musical, which seemed the chant of some unspeakably tranquil joy. None of these apparitions heeded him. His intense longing to accost them, to be of them, to make one of this movement of aerial happiness—for such it seemed to him—made him stretch forth his arms and seek to cry aloud, but only an inarticulate whisper passed his lips; and the movement and the music went on the same as if the mortal were not there. Slowly they glided round and aloft, till, in the same majestic order, one after one, they floated through the casement and were lost in the moonlight; then, as his eyes followed them, the casement became darkened with some object undistinguishable at the first gaze, but which sufficed mysteriously to change into ineffable horror the delight he had before experienced. By degrees, this object shaped itself to his sight. It was as that of a human head, covered with a dark veil, through which glared with livid and demoniac fire eyes that froze the marrow of his bones. Nothing else of the face was distinguishable—nothing but those intolerable eyes; but his terror, that even at the first seemed beyond nature to endure, was increased a thousand-fold, when, after a pause, the Phantom glided slowly into the chamber. The cloud retreated from it as it advanced; the bright lamps grew wan, and flickered restlessly as at the breath of its presence. Its form was veiled as the face, but the outline was that of a female; yet it moved not as move even the ghosts that simulate the living. It seemed rather to crawl as some vast misshapen reptile; and pausing, at length it cowered beside the table which held the mystic volume, and again fixed its eyes through the filmy veil on the rash invoker. All fancies, the most grotesque, of Monk or Painter in the early North, would have failed to give to the visage of imp or fiend that aspect of deadly malignity which spoke to the shuddering

nature in those eyes alone. All else so dark—shrouded—veiled and larva-like. But that burning glare so intense, so livid, yet so living, had in it something that was almost *human*, in its passion of hate and mockery ; something that served to show that the shadowy Horror was not all a spirit, but partook of matter enough, at least, to make it more deadly and fearful an enemy to material forms. As, clinging with the grasp of agony to the wall, his hair erect, his eyeballs starting, he still gazed back upon that appalling gaze, the Image spoke to him—his soul rather than his ear comprehended the words it said.

"Thou hast entered the immeasurable region. I am the Dweller of the Threshold. What wouldst thou with me ? Silent ? Dost thou fear me ? Am I not thy beloved ? Is it not for me that thou hast rendered up the delights of thy race ? Wouldst thou be wise ? Mine is the wisdom of the countless ages. Kiss me, my mortal lover." And the Horror crawled near and nearer to him ; it crept to his side, its breath breathed upon his cheek ! With a sharp cry he fell to the earth insensible, and knew no more till, far in the noon of the next day, he opened his eyes and found himself in his bed, the glorious sun streaming through his lattice, and the bandit Páolo by his side engaged in polishing his carbine, and whistling a Calabrian love air.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Thus Man pursues his weary calling,
And wrings the hard life from the sky,
While Happiness unseen is falling
Down from God's bosom silently."—SCHILLER.

In one of those islands whose history the imperishable literature and renown of Athens yet invest with melancholy interest, and on which Nature, in whom "there is nothing melancholy," still bestows a glory of scenery and climate equally radiant for the freeman or the slave—the Ionian, the Venetian, the Gaul, the Turk, or the restless Briton—Zanoni had fixed his bridal home. There the air carries with it the perfumes of the plains for miles along the blue translucent deep.* Seen from one of its green sloping heights, the island he had selected seemed one delicious garden. The towers and turrets of its capital gleaming amidst groves of oranges and lemons ; vineyards and olivewoods filling up the valleys, and clambering along the hillsides ; and villa, farm, and cot-

* See Dr. Holland's Travels to the Ionian Isles, etc., p. 18.

tage covered with luxuriant trellises of dark green leaves and purple fruit. For there the prodigal beauty yet seems half to justify those graceful superstitions of a creed that, too enamoured of earth, rather brought the deities to man, than raised the man to their less alluring and less voluptuous Olympus.

And still to the fishermen, weaving yet their antique dances on the sand; to the maiden, adorning yet, with many a silver fibula, her glossy tresses under the tree that overshadows her tranquil cot, the same Great Mother that watched over the wise of Samos, the democracy of Corcyra, the graceful and deep-taught loveliness of Miletus, smiles as graciously as of yore. For the North, philosophy and freedom are essentials to human happiness. In the lands which Aphrodite rose from the waves to govern, as the Seasons, hand in hand, stood to welcome her on the shores,* Nature is all-sufficient.

The isle which Zanoni had selected was one of the loveliest in that divine sea. His abode, at some distance from the city, but near one of the creeks on the shore, belonged to a Venetian, and though small, had more of elegance than the natives ordinarily cared for. On the seas, and in sight, rode his vessel. His Indians, as before, ministered in mute gravity to the service of the household. No spot could be more beautiful, no solitude less invaded. To the mysterious knowledge of Zanoni, to the harmless ignorance of Viola, the babbling and garish world of civilized man, was alike unheeded. The loving sky and the lovely earth are companions enough to Wisdom and to Ignorance while they love!

Although, as I have before said, there was nothing in the visible occupations of Zanoni that betrayed a cultivator of the occult sciences, his habits were those of a man who remembers or reflects. He loved to roam alone, chiefly at dawn, or at night, when the moon was clear (especially in each month, at its rise and full), miles and miles away over the rich inlands of the island, and to cull herbs and flowers, which he hoarded with jealous care. Sometimes at the dead of night Viola would wake by an instinct that told her he was not by her side, and, stretching out her arms, find that the instinct had not deceived her. But she early saw that he was reserved on his peculiar habits, and if at times a chill, a foreboding, a suspicious awe crept over her, she forebore to question him. But his rambles were not always unaccompanied; he took pleasure in excursions less solitary. Often, when the sea lay before them like a lake, the barren dreariness of the opposite coast of Cephal-

* Homeric Hymn.

lenia contrasting the smiling shores on which they dwelt, Viola and himself would pass days in cruising slowly around the coast, or in visits to the neighboring isles. Every spot of the Greek soil, "that fair Fable-Land," seemed to him familiar; and as he conversed of the Past, and its exquisite traditions, he taught Viola to love the race from which have descended the poetry and the wisdom of the world. There was much in Zanoni, as she knew him better, that deepened the fascination in which Viola was from the first enthralled. His love for herself was so tender, so vigilant, and had that best and most enduring attribute, that it seemed rather grateful for the happiness in its own cares than vain of the happiness it created. His habitual mood with all who approached him was calm and gentle, almost to apathy. An angry word never passed his lips, an angry gleam never shot from his eyes. Once they had been exposed to the danger not uncommon in those then half-savage lands. Some pirates who infested the neighboring coasts had heard of the arrival of the strangers, and the seamen Zanoni employed had gossiped of their master's wealth. One night after Viola had retired to rest she was awakened by a slight noise below. Zanoni was not by her side; she listened in some alarm. Was that a groan that came upon her ear? She started up, she went to the door; all was still. A footstep now slowly approached, and Zanoni entered calm as usual, and seemed unconscious of her fears. The next morning three men were found dead at the threshold of the principal entrance, the door of which had been forced. They were recognized in the neighborhood as the most sanguine and terrible marauders of the coasts, men stained with a thousand murders, and who had never hitherto failed in any attempt to which the lust of rapine had impelled them. The footsteps of many others were tracked to the seashore. It seemed that their accomplices must have fled on the death of their leaders. But when the Venetian Proveditore, or authority of the island, came to examine into the matter, the most unaccountable mystery was the manner in which these ruffians had met their fate. Zanoni had not stirred from the apartment in which he ordinarily pursued his chemical studies. None of the servants had even been disturbed from their slumbers. No marks of human violence were on the bodies of the dead. They died, and made no sign. From that moment Zanoni's house, nay, the whole vicinity, was sacred. The neighboring villages, rejoiced to be delivered from a scourge, regarded the stranger as one whom the Pagiana (or Virgin) held under her especial protection.

In truth, the lively Greeks around, facile to all external impressions, and struck with the singular and majestic beauty of the man who knew their language as a native, whose voice often cheered them in their humble sorrows, and whose hand was never closed to their wants, long after he had left their shore preserved his memory by grateful traditions, and still point to the lofty platanus beneath which they had often seen him seated, alone and thoughtful, in the heats of noon. But Zanoni had haunts less open to the gaze than the shade of the platanus. In that isle there are the bituminous springs which Herodotus has commemorated. Often at night, the moon, at least, beheld him emerging from the myrtle and cystus that clothe the hillocks around the marsh that embeds the pools containing the inflammable materia, all the medical uses of which, as applied to the nerves of organic life, modern science has not yet perhaps explored. Yet more often would he pass his hours in a cavern, by the loneliest part of the beach, where the stalactites seem almost arranged by the hand of art, and which the superstition of the peasants associate, in some ancient legends, with the numerous and almost incessant earthquakes to which the island is so singularly subjected.

Whatever the pursuits that instigated these wanderings and favored these haunts, either they were linked with, or else subordinate to, one main and master desire, which every fresh day, passed in the sweet human company of Viola, confirmed and strengthened.

The scene that Glyndon had witnessed in his trance was faithful to truth. And some little time after the date of that night, Viola was dimly aware that an influence, she knew not of what nature, was struggling to establish itself over her happy life. Visions, indistinct and beautiful, such as those she had known in her earlier days, but more constant and impressive, began to haunt her night and day when Zanoni was absent, to fade in his presence, and seem less fair than *that*. Zanoni questioned her eagerly and minutely of these visitations, but seemed dissatisfied, and at times perplexed, by her answers.

"Tell me not," he said one day, "of those unconnected images, those evolutions of starry shapes in a choral dance, or those delicious melodies that seem to thee of the music and the language of the distant spheres. Has no *one* shape been to thee more distinct and more beautiful than the rest? No voice uttering, or seeming to utter, thine own tongue and whispering to thee of strange secrets and solemn knowledge?"

"No; all is confused in these dreams, whether of day or

night; and when at the sound of thy footsteps I recover, my memory retains nothing but a vague impression of happiness. How different—how cold—to the rapture of hanging on thy smile, and listening to thy voice, when it says, 'I love thee'!"

"Yet, how is it that visions less fair than these once seemed to thee so alluring? How is it that they then stirred thy fancies and filled thy heart? Once thou didst desire a fairy-land, and now thou seemest so contented with common life!"

"Have I not explained it to thee before? Is it common life, then, to love and to live with the one we love? My true fairy-land is won! Speak to me of no other."

And so Night surprised them by the lonely beach; and Zanoni, allured from his sublimer projects, and bending over that tender face, forgot that, in the Harmonious Infinite which spread around, there were other worlds than that one human heart!

CHAPTER IX.

"There is a principle of the soul, superior to all nature, through which we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world. When the soul is elevated to natures better than itself, *then* it is entirely separated from subordinate natures, exchanges this for another life, and, deserting the order of things with which it was connected, links and mingles itself with another."—IAMBLICHUS.

"ADON-AI! Adon-Ai! Appear, appear!"

And in the lonely cave, whence once had gone forth the oracles of a heathen god, there emerged from the shadows of fantastic rocks a luminous and gigantic column, glittering and shifting. It resembled the shining but misty spray, which, seen afar off, a fountain seems to send up on a starry night. The radiance lit the stalactites, the crags, the arches of the cave, and shed a pale and tremulous splendor on the features of Zanoni.

"Son of eternal light," said the invoker, "thou to whose knowledge, grade after grade, race after race, I attained at last, on the broad Chaldæan plains; thou from whom I have drawn so largely of the unutterable knowledge, that yet eternity alone can suffice to drain; thou who, congenial with myself, so far as our various beings will permit, hast been for centuries my familiar and my friend—answer me and counsel!"

From the column there emerged a shape of unimaginable glory. Its face was that of a man in its first youth; but solemn, as with the consciousness of eternity and the tranquillity of wisdom: light, like starbeams, flowed through its trans-

parent veins ; light made its limbs themselves, and undulated, in restless sparkles, through the waves of its dazzling hair. With its arms folded on its breast, it stood distant a few feet from Zanoni, and its low voice murmured gently : "My counsels were sweet to thee once ; and once, night after night, thy soul could follow my wings through the untroubled splendors of the Infinite. Now thou hast bound thyself back to the earth by its strongest chains, and the attraction to the clay is more potent than the sympathies that drew to thy charms the Dweller of the Starbeam and the Air ! When last thy soul hearkened to me, the senses already troubled thine intellect and obscured thy vision. Once again I come to thee ; but thy power even to summon me to thy side is fading from thy spirit, as sunshine fades from the wave, when the winds drive the cloud between the ocean and the sky."

"Alas, Adon-Ai !" answered the seer mournfully, "I know too well the conditions of the being which thy presence was wont to rejoice. I know that our wisdom comes but from the indifference to the things of the world which the wisdom masters. The mirror of the soul cannot reflect both earth and heaven : and the one vanishes from the surface as the other is glassed upon its deeps. But it is not to restore me to that sublime abstraction in which the Intellect, free and disembodied, rises, region after region, to the spheres, that once again, and with the agony and travail of enfeebled power, I have called thee to mine aid. I love ; and in love I begin to live in the sweet humanities of another ! If wise, yet in all which makes danger powerless against myself, or those on whom I can gaze from the calm height of indifferent science, I am blind as the merest mortal to the destinies of the creature that makes my heart beat with the passions which obscure my gaze."

"What matter !" answered Adon-Ai. "Thy love must be but a mockery of the name ; thou canst not love as they do for whom there are death and the grave. A short time—like a day in thy incalculable life—and the form thou dotest on is dust ! Others of the nether world go hand in hand, each with each, unto the tomb ; hand in hand they ascend from the worm to new cycles of existence. For thee, below are ages ; for her, but hours. And for her and thee, O poor, but mighty one ! will there be even a joint hereafter ! Through what grades and heavens of spiritualized being will her soul have passed when thou, the solitary Loiterer, comest from the vapors of the earth to the gates of light !"

"Son of the Starbeam, thinkest thou that this thought is not with me forever; and seest thou not that I have invoked thee to hearken and minister to my design? Readest thou not my desire and dream to raise the conditions of her being to my own? Thou, Adon-Ai, bathing the celestial joy that makes thy life in the oceans of eternal splendor; thou, save by the sympathies of knowledge, canst conjecture not what I, the offspring of mortals, feel—debarred yet from the objects of the tremendous and sublime ambition that first winged my desires above the clay—when I see myself compelled to stand in this low world alone. I have sought amongst my tribe for comrades, and in vain. At last I have found a mate! The wild bird and the wild beast have theirs; and my mastery over the malignant tribes of terror can banish their larvæ from the path that shall lead her upward till the air of eternity fits the frame for the elixir that baffles death."

"And thou hast begun the initiation, and thou art foiled! I know it. Thou hast conjured to her sleep the fairest visions; thou hast invoked the loveliest children of the air to murmur their music to her trance, and her soul heeds them not; and, returning to the earth, escapes from their control. Blind one, wherefore? Canst thou not perceive? Because in her soul all is love. There is no intermediate passion with which the things thou wouldst charm to her have association and affinities. Their attraction is but to the desires and cravings of the *intellect*. What have they with the *passion* that is of earth, and the *hope* that goes direct to Heaven?"

"But can there be no medium, no link, in which our souls, as our hearts, can be united, and so mine may have influence over her own?"

"Ask me not—thou wilt not comprehend me!"

"I adjure thee! Speak!"

"When two souls are divided, knowest thou not that a third in which both meet and live is the link between them!"

"I do comprehend thee, Adon-Ai," said Zanoni, with a light of more human joy upon his face than it had ever before been seen to wear; "and if my destiny, which here is dark to mine eyes, vouchsafes to me the happy lot of the humble; if ever there be a child that I may clasp to my bosom and call my own!—"

"And is it to be man at last, that thou hast aspired to be more than man?"

"But a child—a second Viola!" murmured Zanoni, scarcely heeding the Son of Light; "a young soul fresh from Heaven,

that I may rear from the first moment it touches earth ; whose wings I may train to follow mine through the glories of creation ; and through whom the mother herself may be led upward over the realm of death ! "

" Beware—reflect ! Knowest thou not that thy darkest enemy dwells in the Real ? Thy wishes bring thee nearer and nearer to humanity."

" Ah, Humanity is sweet ! " answered Zanoni.

And as the Seer spoke, on the glorious face of Adon-Ai there broke a smile.

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CHAPTER X.

" Æterna æternus tribuit, mortalia confert
Mortalis ; divina Deus, peritura caducus." *
AUREL. PRUD. *contra Symmachum*, lib. ii.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

LETTER I.

THOU hast not informed me of the progress of thy pupil ; and I fear that so differently does Circumstance shape the minds of the generations to which we are descended, from the intense and earnest children of the earlier world, that even thy most careful and elaborate guidance would fail, with loftier and purer natures than that of the neophyte thou hast admitted within thy gates. Even that third state of being, which the Indian sage † rightly recognizes as being between the sleep and the waking, and describes imperfectly by the name of TRANCE, is unknown to the children of the northern world ; and few but would recoil to indulge it, regarding its peopled calm as the *máyá* and delusion of the mind. Instead of ripening and culturing that airy soil, from which nature, dûly known, can evoke fruits so rich and flowers so fair, they strive but to exclude it from their gaze ; they esteem that struggle of the intellect from men's narrow world, to the spirit's infinite home, as a disease which the leech must extirpate with pharmacy and drugs, and know not even that it is from this condition of their being, in its most imperfect and infant form, that Poetry, Music, Art—all that belongs to an Idea of Beauty, to which neither *sleeping* nor

* The Eternal gives eternal things ; the Mortal gathers mortal things : God, that which is divine, and the perishable that which is perishable.

† The Brahmins, speaking of Brahm, say : " To the Omniscient the three modes of being—sleep, waking, and trance,—are not " ; distinctly recognizing trance as a third and coequal condition of being.

waking can furnish archetype and actual semblance, take their immortal birth. When we, O Mejnour, in the far time, were ourselves the neophytes and aspirants, we were of a class to which the actual world was shut and barred. Our forefathers had no object in life but knowledge. From the cradle we were predestined and reared to wisdom, as to a priesthood. We commenced research where modern Conjecture closes its faithless wings. And with us, those were the common elements of science which the sages of to-day disdain as wild chimeras, or despair of as unfathomable mysteries. Even the fundamental principles, the large, yet simple theories of Electricity and Magnetism, rest obscure and dim in the disputes of their blinded schools; yet, even in our youth, how few ever attained to the first circle of the brotherhood, and, after wearily enjoying the sublime privileges they sought, they voluntarily abandoned the light of the sun, and sunk, without effort, to the grave, like pilgrims in a trackless desert, overawed by the stillness of their solitude, and appalled by the absence of a goal. Thou, in whom nothing seems to live *but the desire to know;* thou, who, indifferent whether it leads to weal or to woe, lendest thyself to all who would tread the path of mysterious science—a Human Book, insensate to the precepts it enounces—thou hast ever sought, and often made, additions to our number. But to these have only been vouchsafed partial secrets; vanity and passion unfitted them for the rest; and now, without other interest than that of an experiment in science, without love, and without pity, thou exposest this new soul to the hazards of the tremendous ordeal! Thou thinkest that a zeal so inquisitive, a courage so absolute and dauntless, may suffice to conquer, where austerer intellect and purer virtue have so often failed. Thou thinkest, too, that the germ of art that lies in the Painter's mind, as it comprehends in itself the entire embryo of Power and Beauty, may be expanded into the stately flower of the Golden Science. It is a new experiment to thee. Be gentle with thy neophyte, and if his nature disappoint thee in the first stages of the process, dismiss him back to the Real, while it is yet time to enjoy the brief and outward life which dwells in the senses, and closes with the tomb. And as I thus admonish the, O Mejnour, wilt thou smile at my inconsistent hopes? I, who have so invariably refused to initiate others into our mysteries, I begin at last to comprehend why the great law, which binds man to his kind, even when seeking most to set himself aloof from their condition, has made thy cold and bloodless science the link between thy-

self and thy race; why *thou* hast sought converts and pupils; why, in seeing life after life voluntarily dropping from our starry order, thou still aspirest to renew the vanished, and repair the lost; why, amidst thy calculations, restless and unceasing as the wheels of Nature herself, thou recoilest from the thought TO BE ALONE! So with myself; at last I, too, seek a convert—an equal; I, too, shudder to be alone! What thou hast warned me of has come to pass. Love reduces all things to itself. Either must I be drawn down to the nature of the beloved, or hers must be lifted to my own. As whatever belongs to true Art has always necessarily had attraction for *us*, whose very being is in the ideal whence art descends, so in this fair creature I have learned, at last, the secret that bound me to her at the first glance. The daughter of music—music passing into her being, became poetry. It was not the stage that attracted her, with its hollow falsehoods; it was the land in her own fancy which the stage seemed to centre and represent. There the poetry found a voice; there it struggled into imperfect shape; and then (that land insufficient for it) it fell back upon itself. It colored her thoughts, it suffused her soul; it asked not words, it created not things; it gave birth but to emotions, and lavished itself on dreams. At last came love; and there, as a river into the sea, it poured its restless waves, to become mute, and deep, and still, the everlasting mirror of the heavens.

And is it not through this poetry which lies within her that she may be led into the large poetry of the universe! Often I listen to her careless talk, and find oracles in its unconscious beauty, as we find strange virtues in some lonely flower. I see her mind ripening under my eyes; and in its fair fertility what ever-teeming novelties of thought! O Mejnour, how many of our tribe have unravelled the laws of the universe, have solved the riddles of the exterior nature, and deduced the light from darkness! And is not the POET, who studies nothing but the human heart, a greater philosopher than all? Knowledge and atheism are incompatible. To know nature is to know that there must be a God! But does it require this to examine the method and architecture of creation? Methinks, when I look upon a pure mind, however ignorant and childlike, that I see the August and Immaterial One, more clearly than in all the orbs of matter which career at His bidding through the space.

Rightly is it the fundamental decree of our order, that we must impart our secrets only to the pure. The most terrible

part of the ordeal is in the temptations that our power affords to the criminal. If it were possible that a malevolent being could attain to our faculties, what disorder it might introduce into the globe! Happy that it is *not* possible; the malevolence would disarm the power. It is in the purity of Viola that I rely, as thou more vainly hast relied on the courage or the genius of thy pupils. Bear me witness, Mejnour! Never since the distant day in which I pierced the Arcana of our knowledge, have I ever sought to make its mysteries subservient to unworthy objects; though, alas! the extension of our existence robs us of a country and a home; though the law that places all science, as all art, in the abstraction from the noisy passions and turbulent ambition of actual life, forbids us to influence the destinies of nations, for which Heaven selects ruder and blinder agencies; yet, wherever have been my wanderings, I have sought to soften distress, and to convert from sin. My power has been hostile only to the guilty; and yet, with all our lore, how in each step we are reduced to be but the permitted instruments of the Power, that vouchsafes our own, but only to direct it. How all our wisdom shrinks into nought, compared with that which gives the meanest herb its virtues, and peoples the smallest globule with its appropriate world. And while we are allowed at times to influence the happiness of others, how mysteriously the shadows thicken round our own future doom! We cannot be prophets to ourselves! With what trembling hope I nurse the thought that I may preserve to my solitude the light of a living smile!

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EXTRACTS FROM LETTER II.

Deeming myself not pure enough to initiate so pure a heart, I invoke to her trance those fairest and most tender inhabitants of space that have furnished to Poetry, which is the instinctive guess into creation, the ideas of the Glendoveer and Sylph. And these were less pure than her own thoughts, and less tender than her own love! They could not raise her above her human heart, for *that* has a heaven of its own.

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I have just looked on her in sleep—I have heard her breathe my name. Alas! that which is so sweet to others has its bitterness to me; for I think how soon the time may come when that sleep will be without a dream; when the heart that dictates the name will be cold, and the lips that utter it be dumb. What a twofold shape there is in love! If we examine it

coarsely—if we look but on its fleshly ties, its enjoyments of a moment, its turbulent fever and its dull reaction, how strange it seems that this passion should be the supreme mover of the world ; that it is this which has dictated the greatest sacrifices, and influenced all societies and all times ; that to this the loftiest and loveliest genius has ever consecrated its devotion ; that but for love there were no civilization, no music, no poetry, no beauty, no life beyond the brute's.

But examine it in its heavenlier shape, in its utter abnegation of self, in its intimate connection with all that is most delicate and subtle in the spirit—its power above all that is sordid in existence ; its mastery over the idols of the baser worship ; its ability to create a palace of the cottage, an oasis in the desert, a summer in the Iceland—where it breathes, and fertilizes, and glows ; and the wonder rather becomes how so few regard it in its holiest nature. What the sensual call its enjoyments, are the least of its joys. True love is less a passion than a symbol. Mejnour, shall the time come when I can speak to thee of Viola as a thing that was ?

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EXTRACT FROM LETTER III.

Knowest thou that of late I have sometimes asked myself, "Is there no guilt in the knowledge that has so divided us from our race ?" It is true that the higher we ascend, the more hateful seem to us the vices of the short-lived creepers of the earth—the more the sense of the goodness of the All-good penetrates and suffuses us, and the more immediately does our happiness seem to emanate from Him. But, on the other hand, how many virtues must lie dead in those who live in the world of death, and refuse to die ! Is not this sublime egotism, this state of abstraction and revery, this self-wrapt and self-dependent majesty of existence, a resignation of that nobility which incorporates our own welfare, our joys, our hopes, our fears with others ? To live on in no dread of foes, undegraded by infirmity, secure through the cares, and free from the disease of flesh, is a spectacle that captivates our pride. And yet dost thou not more admire—him who dies for another ? Since I have loved her, Mejnour, it seems almost cowardice to elude the grave which devours the hearts that wrap us in their folds. I feel it—the earth grows upon my spirit. Thou wert right ; eternal age, serene, and passionless, is a happier boon than eternal youth, with its yearnings and desires. Until we can be all spirit, the tranquillity of solitude must be indifference.

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EXTRACTS FROM LETTER IV.

I have received thy communication. What! Is it so? Has thy pupil disappointed thee? Alas, poor pupil! But—

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(Here follow comments on those passages in Glyndon's life already known to the reader, or about to be made so, with earnest adjurations to Mejnour to watch yet over the fate of his scholar.)

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But I cherish the same desire, with a warmer heart. My pupil! How the terrors that shall encompass thine ordeal warn me from the task! Once more I will seek the Son of Light.

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Yes, Adon-Ai, long deaf to my call, at last, has descended to my vision, and left behind him the glory of his presence in the shape of Hope. Oh, not impossible, Viola, not impossible, that we yet may be united, soul with soul.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER V. (*many months after the last*).

Mejnour, awake from thine apathy—rejoice! A new soul will be born to the world. A new soul that shall call me Father. Ah, if they for whom exist all the occupations and resources of human life—if they can thrill, with exquisite emotion, at the thought of hailing again their own childhood in the faces of their children; if, in that birth, they are born once more into the holy Innocence which is the first state of existence; if they can feel that on man devolves almost an Angel's duty, when he has a life to guide from the cradle, and a soul to nurture for the Heaven—what to me must be the rapture, to welcome an Inheritor of all the gifts which double themselves in being shared! How sweet the power to watch, and to guard; to instil the knowledge, to avert the evil, and to guide back the river of life in a richer, and broader, and deeper stream, to the paradise from which it flows! And beside that river our souls shall meet, sweet Mother. Our child shall supply the sympathy that fails as yet; and what shape shall haunt thee, what terror shall dismay, when thy initiation is beside the cradle of thy child!

CHAPTER XI.

"They thus beguile the way
Until the blustring storme is overblowne,
When weening to returne whence they did stray
They cannot finde that path which first was showne,
But wander to and fro in waies unknowne."

—SPENSER'S *Faerie Queene*, book i. canto i. st. x.

YES, Viola, thou art another being than when, by the

threshold of thy Italian home, thou didst follow thy dim fancies through the Land of Shadow ; or when thou didst vainly seek to give voice to an Ideal beauty, on the boards where Illusion counterfeits Earth and Heaven for an hour, till the weary sense, awaking, sees but the tinsel and the scene-shifter. Thy spirit reposes in its own happiness. Its wanderings have found a goal. In a moment, there often dwells the sense of eternity ; for when profoundly happy, we know that it is impossible to die. Whenever the soul *feels itself*, it feels everlasting life !

The initiation is deferred ; thy days and nights are left to no other visions than those with which a contented heart enchants a guileless fancy. Glendoveers and sylphs, pardon me if I question whether those visions are not lovelier than yourselves !

They stand by the beach, and see the sun sinking into the sea. How long now have they dwelt on that island ? What matters ! It may be months, or years—what matters ! Why should I, or they, keep account of that happy time ? As in the dream of a moment ages may seem to pass, so shall we measure transport or woe—by the length of the dream, or the number of emotions that the dream involves ?

The sun sinks slowly down ; the air is arid and oppressive ; on the sea the stately vessel lies motionless ; on the shore no leaf trembles on the trees.

Viola drew nearer to Zanoni ; a presentiment she could not define made her heart beat more quickly ; and, looking into his face, she was struck with its expression ; it was anxious, abstracted, perturbed.

" This stillness awes me," she whispered.

Zanoni did not seem to hear her. He muttered to himself, and his eyes gazed round restlessly. She knew not why, but that gaze, which seemed to pierce into space, that muttered voice in some foreign language, revived dimly her earlier superstitions. She was more fearful since the hour when she knew that she was to be a mother. Strange crisis in the life of woman, and in her love ! Something yet unborn begins already to divide her heart with that which had been before its only monarch !

" Look on me, Zanoni," she said, pressing his hand.

He turned : " Thou art pale, Viola ; thy hand trembles ! "

" It is true. I feel as if some enemy were creeping near us."

" And the instinct deceives thee not. An enemy is indeed at hand. I see it through the heavy air ; I hear it through the

silence: the Ghostly One—the Destroyer—the PESTILENCE! Ah, seest thou how the leaves swarm with insects, only by an effort visible to the eye. They follow the breath of the plague!" As he spoke, a bird fell from the boughs at Viola's feet; it fluttered, it writhed an instant, and was dead.

"Oh, Viola!" cried Zanoni passionately, "that is death. Dost thou not fear to die?"

"To leave thee? Ah, yes!"

"And if I could teach thee how Death may be defied, if I could arrest for thy youth the course of time, if I could—"

He paused abruptly, for Viola's eyes spoke only terror; her cheek and lips were pale.

"Speak not thus—look not thus," she said, recoiling from him. "You dismay me. Ah, speak not thus, or I should tremble—no, not for myself, but for thy child."

"Thy child! But wouldst thou reject for thy child the same glorious boon?"

"Zanoni!"

"Well!"

"The sun has sunk from our eyes but to rise on those of others. To disappear from this world, is to live in the world afar. O, lover! husband!" she continued, with sudden energy, "tell me that thou didst but jest, that thou didst but trifle with my folly! There is less terror in the pestilence than in thy words."

Zanoni's brow darkened; he looked at her in silence for some moments, and then said, almost severely:

"What hast thou known of me to distrust?"

"Oh, pardon, pardon! Nothing!" cried Viola, throwing herself on his breast, and bursting into tears. "I will not believe even thine own words if they seem to wrong thee!" He kissed the tears from her eyes, but made no answer.

"And ah!" she resumed, with an enchanting and child-like smile, "if thou wouldst give me a charm against the pestilence, see, I will take it from thee." And she laid her hand on a small antique amulet that he wore on his breast.

"Thou knowest how often this has made me jealous of the past: surely some love-gift, Zanoni? But no, thou didst not love the giver as thou dost me. Shall I steal thine amulet?"

"Infant," said Zanoni tenderly; "she who placed this round my neck deemed it indeed a charm, for she had superstitions like thyself; but to me it is more than the wizard's spell—it is the relic of a sweet vanished time, when none who loved me could distrust."

He said these words in a tone of such melancholy reproach, that it went to the heart of Viola; but the tone changed into a solemnity which chilled back the gush of her feelings as he resumed: "And this, Viola, one day perhaps I will transfer from my breast to thine; yes, whenever thou shalt comprehend me better, *whenever the laws of our being shall be the same.*"

He moved on gently. They returned slowly home; but fear still was in the heart of Viola, though she strove to shake it off. Italian and Catholic she was, with all the superstitions of land and sect. She stole to her chamber and prayed before a little relic of San Gennaro, which the priest of her house had given to her in childhood, and which had accompanied her in all her wanderings. She had never deemed it possible to part with it before. Now, if there was a charm against the pestilence, did she fear the pestilence for herself? The next morning when he woke, Zanoni found the relic of the saint suspended, with his mystic amulet, round his neck.

"Ah! thou wilt have nothing to fear from the pestilence now," said Viola, between tears and smiles; "and when thou wouldst talk to me again as thou didst last night, the saint shall rebuke thee."

Well, Zanoni, can there ever indeed be commune of thought and spirit, except with equals?

Yes, the Plague broke out; the island home must be abandoned. Mighty Seer, *thou hast no power to save those whom thou lovest!* Farewell, thou bridal roof! Sweet resting-place from Care, farewell! Climates as soft may greet ye, O lovers; skies as serene, and waters as blue and calm. But *that time*, can it ever more return? Who shall say that the heart does not change with the scene, the place where we first dwelt with the beloved one? Every spot *there* has so many memories which the place only can recall. The past that haunts it seems to command such constancy in the future. If a thought less kind, less trustful, enter within us, the sight of a tree under which a vow has been exchanged, a tear has been kissed away, restores us again to the hours of the first divine illusion. But in a home where nothing speaks of the first nuptials, where there is no eloquence of association, no holy burial-places of emotions, whose ghosts are angels!—yes, who that has gone through the sad history of Affection will tell us that the heart changes not with the scene! Blow fair, ye favoring winds; cheerily swell, ye sails; away from the land where Death has come to snatch the sceptre of Love! The shores glide by; new coasts succeed to the green hills and orange groves of the Bridal Isle.

From afar now gleam in the moonlight the columns, yet extant, of a temple which the Athenians dedicated to Wisdom: and, standing on the bark that bounded on in the freshening gale, the votary who had survived the goddess murmured to himself:

"Has the wisdom of ages brought me no happier hours than those common to the shepherd and the herdsman, with no world beyond their village, no aspiration beyond the kiss and the smile of home?"

And the moon resting alike over the ruins of the temple of the departed Creed, over the hut of the living peasant, over the immemorial mountain top, and the perishable herbage that clothed its sides, seemed to smile back its answer of calm disdain to the being who, perchance, might have seen the temple built, and who, in his inscrutable existence, might behold the mountain shattered from its base.

BOOK V.—THE EFFECTS OF THE ELIXIR.

"Frommt's den Schleier aufzuheben,
Wo das nahe Schreckniss droht?
Nur das Irrthum ist das Leben
Und das Wissen ist der Tod." *

—SCHILLER, *Kassandra.*

CHAPTER I.

"Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust.
* * * *
Was stehst du so, und blickst erstaunt hinaus?" †

—*Faust.*

IT will be remembered that we left Master Páolo by the bedside of Glyndon; and as, waking from that profound slumber, the recollections of the past night came horribly back to his mind, the Englishman uttered a cry, and covered his face with his hands.

"Good-morrow, Excellency," said Páolo gayly. "Corpo di Bacco, you have slept soundly!"

* Delusion is the life we live
And knowledge death; oh, wherefore, then,
To sight the coming evils give
And lift the veil of Fate to Man?

† Two souls dwell, alas! in my breast.
* * * *
Why standest thou so, and lookest out astonished?

The sound of this man's voice, so lusty, ringing, and healthful, served to scatter before it the phantasma that yet haunted Glyndon's memory.

He rose erect in his bed. "And where did you find me? Why are you here?"

"Where did I find you!" repeated Páolo in surprise; "in your bed, to be sure. "Why am I here! Because the Padrone bade me await your waking, and attend your commands."

"The Padrone, Mejnour! Is he arrived?"

"Arrived and departed, Signor. He has left this letter for you."

"Give it me, and wait without till I am dressed."

"At your service. I have bespoke an excellent breakfast: you must be hungry. I am a very tolerable cook: a monk's son ought to be! You will be startled at my genius in the dressing of fish. My singing, I trust, will not disturb you. I always sing while I prepare a salad; it harmonizes the ingredients." And slinging his carbine over his shoulder, Páolo sauntered from the room, and closed the door.

Glyndon was already deep in the contents of the following letter:

"When I first received thee as my pupil, I promised Zanoni, if convinced by thy first trials that thou couldst but swell, not the number of our order, but the list of the victims who have aspired to it in vain, I would not rear thee to thine own wretchedness and doom; I would dismiss thee back to the world. I fulfil my promise. Thine ordeal has been the easiest that neophyte ever knew. I asked for nothing but abstinence from the sensual, and a brief experiment of thy patience and thy faith. Go back to thine own world; thou hast no nature to aspire to ours!

"It was I who prepared Páolo to receive thee at the revel. It was I who instigated the old beggar to ask thee for alms. It was I who left open the book that thou couldst not read without violating my command. Well, thou hast seen what awaits thee at the threshold of knowledge. Thou hast confronted the first foe that menaces him whom the senses yet grasp and enthral. Dost thou wonder that I close upon thee the gates forever! Dost thou not comprehend, at last, that it needs a soul tempered, and purified, and raised, not by external spells, but by its own sublimity and valor, to pass the threshold, and disdain the foe? Wretch, all my science avails nothing for the rash, for the sensual—for him who desires our secrets but to pollute them to gross enjoyments and selfish vice. How have the im-

postors and sorcerers of the earlier times perished by their very attempt to penetrate the mysteries that should purify, and not deprave! They have boasted of the philosopher's stone, and died in rags! of the immortal elixir, and sank to their grave, gray before their time. Legends tell you, that the fiend rent them into fragments. Yes; the fiend of their own unholy desires and criminal designs! What they coveted thou covetest; and if thou hadst the wings of a seraph, thou couldst soar not from the slough of thy mortality. Thy desire for knowledge, but petulant presumption; thy thirst for happiness, but the diseased longing for the unclean and muddied waters of corporeal pleasure; thy very love, which usually elevates even the mean, a passion that calculates treason, amidst the first glow of lust—*thou*, one of us! Thou, a brother of the August Order! Thou, an Aspirant to the Stars that shine in the Shemaiâ of the Chaldæan lore! The eagle can raise but the eaglet to the sun. I abandon thee to thy twilight!

"But, alas, for thee, disobedient and profane! thou hast inhaled the elixir; thou hast attracted to thy presence a ghastly and remorseless foe! Thou thyself must exorcise the phantom thou hast raised. Thou must return to the world; but not without punishment and strong effort canst thou regain the calm and the joy of the life thou hast left behind. This for thy comfort will I tell thee: he who has drawn into his frame even so little of the volatile and vital energy of the aerial juices as thyself, has awakened faculties that cannot sleep—faculties that may yet, with patient humility, with sound faith, and the courage that is not of the body like thine, but of the resolute and virtuous mind, attain, if not to the knowledge that reigns above, to high achievement in the career of men. Thou wilt find the restless influence in all that thou wouldst undertake. Thy heart, amidst vulgar joys, will aspire to something holier; thy ambition, amidst coarse excitement, to something beyond thy reach. But deem not that this of itself will suffice for glory. Equally may the craving lead thee to shame and guilt. It is but an imperfect and newborn energy, which will not suffer thee to repose. As thou directest it, must thou believe it to be the emanation of thine evil genius or thy good.

"But woe to thee! insect meshed in the web in which thou hast entangled limbs and wings! Thou has not only inhaled the elixir, thou hast conjured the spectre; of all the tribes of the space, no foe is so malignant to man—and thou hast lifted the veil from thy gaze. I cannot restore to thee the happy dimness of thy vision. Know, at least, that all of us—the

highest and the wisest—who have, in sober truth, passed beyond the threshold, have had, as our first fearful task, to master and subdue its grisly and appalling guardian. Know that thou *canst* deliver thyself from those livid eyes ; know that, while they haunt, they cannot harm, if thou resistest the thoughts to which they tempt, and the horror they engender. *Dread them most when thou beholdest them not.* And thus, son of the worm, we part ! All that I can tell thee to encourage, yet to warn and to guide, I have told thee in these lines. Not from me, from thyself, has come the gloomy trial, from which I yet trust thou wilt emerge into peace. Type of the knowledge that I serve, I withhold no lesson from the pure aspirant ; I am a dark enigma to the general seeker. As man's only indestructible possession is his memory, so it is not in mine art to crumble into matter the immaterial thoughts that have sprung up within thy breast. The tyro might shatter this castle to the dust, and topple down the mountain to the plain. The master has no power to say, 'Exist no more,' to one THOUGHT that his knowledge has inspired. Thou mayst change the thought into new forms ; thou mayst rarify and sublimate it into a finer spirit, but thou canst not annihilate that which has no home but in the memory, no substance but the idea. EVERY THOUGHT IS A SOUL ! Vainly, therefore, would I or thou undo the past, or restoret o thee the gay blindness of thy youth. Thou must endure the influence of the elixir thou has inhaled ; thou must wrestle with the spectre thou hast invoked !"

The letter fell from Glyndon's hand. A sort of stupor succeeded to the various emotions which had chased each other in the perusal—a stupor, resembling that which follows the sudden destruction of any ardent and long-nursed hope in the human heart, whether it be of love, of avarice, of ambition. The loftier world for which he had so thirsted, sacrificed, and toiled, was closed upon him "forever," and by his own faults of rashness and presumption. But Glyndon's was not of that nature which submits long to condemn itself. His indignation began to kindle against Mejnour, who owned he had tempted, and who now abandoned him—abandoned him to the presence of a spectre. The Mystic's reproaches stung, rather than humbled, him. What crime had he committed to deserve language so harsh and disdainful ? Was it so deep a debasement to feel pleasure in the smile and the eyes of Fillide ? Had not Zanoni himself confessed love for Viola ? Had he not fled with her as his companion ? Glyndon never paused to consider if there are no distinctions between one kind of love and

another! Where, too, was the great offence of yielding to a temptation which only existed for the brave? Had not the mystic volume which Mejnour had purposely left open, bid him, but "Beware of fear"? Was not, then, every wilful provocative held out to the strongest influences of the human mind, in the prohibition to enter the chamber; in the possession of the key which excited his curiosity; in the volume which seemed to dictate the mode by which the curiosity was to be gratified? As, rapidly, these thoughts passed over him, he began to consider the whole conduct of Mejnour either as a perfidious design to entrap him to his own misery, or as the trick of an impostor, who knew that he could not realize the great professions he had made. On glancing again over the more mysterious threats and warnings in Mejnour's letter, they seemed to assume the language of mere parable and allegory—the jargon of the Platonists and Pythagoreans. By little and little, he began to consider that the very spectra he had seen—even that one phantom so horrid in its aspect—were but the delusions which Mejnour's science had enabled him to raise. The healthful sunlight, filling up every cranny in his chamber, seemed to laugh away the terrors of the past night. His pride and his resentment nerved his habitual courage; and when, having hastily dressed himself, he rejoined Páolo, it was with a flushed cheek, and a haughty step.

"So, Páolo," said he, "the Padrone, as you call him, told you to expect and welcome me at your village feast?"

"He did so, by a message from a wretched old cripple. This surprised me at the time, for I thought he was far distant. But these great philosophers make a joke of two or three hundred leagues."

"Why did you not tell me you had heard from Mejnour?"

"Because the old cripple forbade me."

"Did you not see the man afterwards during the dance?"

"No, Excellency."

"Humph!"

"Allow me to serve you," said Páolo, piling Glyndon's plate, and then filling his glass. "I wish, Signor, now the Padrone is gone, not (added Páolo, as he cast rather a frightened and suspicious glance round the room), that I mean to say anything disrespectful of him—I wish, I say, now that he is gone, that you would take pity on yourself, and ask your own heart what your youth was meant for? Not to bury yourself alive in these old ruins, and endanger body and soul by studies which I am sure no saint could approve of."

"Are the saints so partial, then, to your own occupations, Master Páolo?"

"Why," answered the bandit, a little confused, "a gentleman with plenty of pistoles in his purse need not, of necessity, make it his profession to take away the pistoles of other people! It is a different thing for us poor rogues. After all, too, I always devote a tithe of my gains to the Virgin; and I share the rest charitably with the poor. But eat, drink, enjoy yourself, be absolved by your confessor for any little peccadilloes, and don't run too long scores at a time—that's my advice. Your health, Excellency! Pshaw, Signor, fasting, except on the days prescribed to a good Catholic, only engenders phantoms."

"Phantoms!"

"Yes; the devil always tempts the empty stomach. To covet, to hate, to thieve, to rob, and to murder—these are the natural desires of a man who is famishing. With a full belly, Signor, we are at peace with all the world. That's right: you like the partridge! Cospetto! When I myself have passed two or three days in the mountains, with nothing from sunset to sunrise but a black crust and an onion, I grow as fierce as a wolf. That's not the worst, too. In these times I see little imps dancing before me. Oh, yes; fasting is as full of spectres as a field of battle."

Glyndon thought there was some sound philosophy in the reasoning of his companion; and, certainly, the more he ate and drank, the more the recollection of the past night and of Mejnour's desertion faded from his mind. The casement was open, the breeze blew, the sun shone, all Nature was merry; and merry as Nature herself grew Maêstro Páolo. He talked of adventures, of travel, of women, with a hearty gusto that had its infection. But Glyndon listened yet more complacently when Páolo turned with an arch smile to praises of the eye, the teeth, the ankles, and the shape of the handsome Fillide.

This man, indeed, seemed the very personation of animal sensual life. He would have been to Faust a more dangerous tempter than Mephistopheles. There was no sneer on *his* lip at the pleasures which animated his voice. To one awaking to a sense of the vanities in knowledge, this reckless, ignorant joyousness of temper was a worse corruptor than all the icy mockeries of a learned Fiend. But when Páolo took his leave, with a promise to return the next day, the mind of the Englishman again settled back to a graver and more thoughtful mood. The elixir seemed, in truth, to have left the refining effects Mejnour had ascribed to it. As Glyndon paced to and fro the

solitary corridor, or pausing, gazed upon the extended and glorious scenery that stretched below, high thoughts of enterprise and ambition, bright visions of glory, passed in rapid succession through his soul.

"Mejnour denies me his science. Well," said the painter proudly, "he has not robbed me of my art."

What, Clarence Glyndon, dost thou return to that from which thy career commenced? Was Zanoni right after all?

He found himself in the chamber of the Mystic: not a vessel, not a herb! The solemn volume is vanished, the elixir shall sparkle for him no more! But still in the room itself seems to linger the atmosphere of a charm. Faster and fiercer it burns within thee, the desire to achieve, to create! Thou longest for a life beyond the sensual! But the life that is permitted to all genius—that which breathes through the immortal work, and endures in the imperishable name.

Where are the implements for thine art? Tush! When did the true workman ever fail to find his tools? Thou art again in thine own chamber—the white wall thy canvas—a fragment of charcoal for thy pencil. They suffice, at least, to give outline to the conception, that may otherwise vanish with the morrow.

The idea that thus excited the imagination of the artist was unquestionably noble and august. It was derived from that Egyptian ceremonial which Diodorus has recorded; the Judgment of the Dead by the Living:* when the corpse, duly embalmed, is placed by the margin of the Acherusian Lake, and before it may be consigned to the bark which is to bear it across the waters to its final resting-place, it is permitted to the appointed judges to hear all accusations of the past life of the deceased, and, if proved, to deprive the corpse of the rites of sepulture.

Unconsciously to himself, it was Mejnour's description of this custom, which he had illustrated by several anecdotes not to be found in books, that now suggested the design to the artist, and gave it reality and force. He supposed a powerful and guilty king whom in life scarce a whisper had dared to arraign, but against whom, now the breath was gone, came the slave from his fetters, the mutilated victim from his dungeon, livid and squalid as if dead themselves, invoking with parched lips the justice that outlives the grave.

Strange fervor this, O Artist, breaking suddenly forth from the mists and darkness which the occult science had spread so

* Diod., lib. i.

long over thy fancies—strange that the reaction of the night's terror and the day's disappointment should be back to thine holy art! Oh, how freely goes the bold hand over the large outline! How, despite those rude materials, speaks forth no more the pupil, but the master! Fresh yet from the glorious elixir, how thou givest to thy creatures the finer life denied to thyself? Some power not thine own writes the grand symbols on the wall. Behind, rises the mighty sepulchre, on the building of which repose to the dead, the lives of thousands had been consumed. There, sit in a semicircle the solemn judges. Black and sluggish flows the lake. There lies the mummied and royal dead. Dost thou quail at the frown on his lifelike brow? Ha! bravely done, O Artist! Up rise the haggard forms! Pale speak the ghastly faces! Shall not Humanity after death avenge itself on Power? Thy conception, Clarence Glyndon, is a sublime truth; thy design promises renown to genius. Better this magic than the charms of the volume and the vessel. Hour after hour has gone; thou hast lighted the lamp; night sees thee yet at thy labor. Merciful heaven! What chills the atmosphere? Why does the lamp grow wan? Why does thy hair bristle? There!—there!—there! At the casement! It gazes on thee, the dark, mantled, loathsome Thing! There, with their devilish mockery and hateful craft, glare on thee those horrid eyes!

He stood and gazed. It was no delusion. It spoke not, moved not, till, unable to bear longer that steady and burning look, he covered his face with his hands. With a start, with a thrill he removed them; he felt the nearer presence of the Nameless. There, it cowered on the floor beside his design; and, lo! the figures seemed to start from the wall! Those pale, accusing figures, the shapes he himself had raised, frowned at him and gibbered. With a violent effort that convulsed his whole being, and bathed his body in the sweat of agony, the young man mastered his horror. He strode towards the Phantom; he endured its eyes; he accosted it with a steady voice; he demanded its purpose and defied its power.

And then, as a wind from a charnel, was heard its voice. What it said, what revealed, it is forbidden the lips to repeat, the hand to record. Nothing, save the subtle life that yet animated the frame, to which the inhalations of the elixir had given vigor and energy beyond the strength of the strongest, could have survived that awful hour. Better to wake in the catacombs and see the buried rise from their cerements, and hear the ghouls, in their horrid orgies, amongst the festering

ghastliness of corruption, than to front those features when the veil was lifted, and listen to that whispered voice!

* * * * * * *

The next day Glyndon fled from the ruined castle. With what hopes of starry light had he crossed the threshold; with what memories to shudder evermore at the darkness, did he look back at the frown of its time-worn towers.

CHAPTER II.

"FAUST. Wohin soll es nun gehn?
MEPHIST. Wohin es Dir gefällt.
Wir sehn di kleine, dann di grosse Welt." *
—*Faust.*

DRAW your chair to the fireside, brush clean the hearth, and trim the lights. Oh, home of sleekness, order, substance, comfort. Oh, excellent thing art thou, Matter of Fact.

It is some time after the date of the last chapter. Here we are, not in moonlit islands, or mouldering castles, but in a room twenty-six feet by twenty-two, well carpeted, well cushioned, solid arm-chairs, and eight such bad pictures, in such fine frames, upon the walls! Thomas Mervale, Esq., merchant of London, you are an enviable dog!

It was the easiest thing in the world for Mervale, on returning from his continental episode of life, to settle down to his desk: his heart had been always there. The death of his father gave him, as a birthright, a high position in a respectable, though second-rate, firm. To make this establishment first-rate was an honorable ambition—it was his! He had lately married, not entirely for money—no! he was worldly rather than mercenary. He had no romantic ideas of love; but he was too sensible a man not to know that a wife should be a companion, not merely a speculation. He did not care for beauty and genius, but he liked health and good temper, and a certain portion of useful understanding. He chose a wife from his reason, not his heart, and a very good choice he made. Mrs. Mervale was an excellent young woman: bustling, managing, economical, but affectionate and good. She had a will of her own, but was no shrew. She had a great notion of the rights of a wife, and a strong perception of the qualities that ensure comfort. She would never have forgiven her husband,

* F. Whither go now?
M. Whither it pleases thee.
We see the small world, then the great.

had she found him guilty of the most passing fancy for another ; but, in return, she had the most admirable sense of propriety herself. She held in abhorrence all levity, all flirtation, all coquetry : small vices, which often ruin domestic happiness, but which a giddy nature incurs without consideration. But she did not think it right to love a husband overmuch. She left a surplus of affection for all her relations, all her friends, some of her acquaintances, and the possibility of a second marriage, should any accident happen to Mr. M. She kept a good table, for it suited their station, and her temper was considered even, though firm ; but she could say a sharp thing or two, if Mr. Mervale was not punctual to a moment. She was very particular that he should change his shoes on coming home—the carpets were new and expensive. She was not sulky, nor passionate, Heaven bless her for that ! But when displeased, she showed it, administered a dignified rebuke, alluded to her own virtues ; to her uncle, who was an admiral, and to the thirty thousand pounds which she had brought to the object of her choice. But as Mr. Mervale was a good-humored man, owned his faults, and subscribed to her excellence, the displeasure was soon over.

Every household has its little disagreements ; none fewer than that of Mr. and Mrs. Mervale. Mrs. Mervale, without being improperly fond of dress, paid due attention to it. She was never seen out of her chamber with papers in her hair, nor in that worst of disillusions—a morning wrapper. At half-past eight every morning Mrs. Mervale was dressed for the day, that is, till she re-dressed for dinner ; her stays well laced, her cap prim, her gowns, winter and summer, of a thick, handsome silk. Ladies at that time wore very short waists ; so did Mrs. Mervale. Her morning ornaments were a thick gold chain, to which was suspended a gold watch—none of those fragile dwarfs of mechanism, that look so pretty, and go so ill—but a handsome repeater, which chronicled Father Time to a moment ; also a mosaic brooch ; also a miniature of her uncle, the admiral, set in a bracelet. For the evening, she had two handsome sets—necklace, earrings, and bracelets complete—one of amethysts, the other topazes. With these, her costume, for the most part, was gold-colored satin and a turban, in which last her picture had been taken. Mrs. Mervale had an aquiline nose, good teeth, fair hair, and light eyelashes, rather a high complexion, what is generally called a fine bust, full cheeks, large useful feet, made for walking, large white hands, with filbert nails, on which not a speck of dust had,

even in childhood, ever been known to alight. She looked a little older than she really was; but that might arise from a certain air of dignity, and the aforesaid aquiline nose. She generally wore short mittens. She never read any poetry but Goldsmith's and Cowper's. She was not amused by novels, though she had no prejudice against them. She liked a play and a pantomime, with a slight supper afterwards. She did not like concerts nor operas. At the beginning of the winter, she selected some book to read, and some piece of work to commence. The two lasted her till the spring, when, though she continued to work, she left off reading. Her favorite study was history, which she read through the medium of Dr. Goldsmith. Her favorite author in the *belles lettres* was, of course, Dr. Johnson. A worthier woman, or one more respected, was not to be found, except in an epitaph!

It was an autumn night. Mr. and Mrs. Mervale, lately returned from an excursion to Weymouth, are in the drawing-room—"the dame sate on this side, the man sat on that."

"Yes, I assure you, my dear, that Glyndon, with all his eccentricities, was a very engaging, amiable fellow. You would certainly have liked him—all the women did."

"My dear Thomas, you will forgive the remark, but that expression of yours—'all the *women*'—"

"I beg your pardon, you are right. I meant to say that he was a general favorite with your charming sex."

"I understand, rather a frivolous character."

"Frivolous! No, not exactly; a little unsteady, very odd, but certainly not frivolous; presumptuous and headstrong in character, but modest and shy in his manners, rather too much so—just what you like. However, to return; I am seriously uneasy at the accounts I have heard of him to-day. He has been living, it seems, a very strange and irregular life, travelling from place to place, and must have spent already a great deal of money."

"Apropos of money," said Mrs. Mervale; "I fear we must change our butcher: he is certainly in league with the cook."

"That is a pity; his beef is remarkably fine. These London servants are as bad as the Carbonari. But, as I was saying, poor Glyndon—"

Here a knock was heard at the door. "Bless me," said Mrs. Mervale, "it is past ten! Who can that possibly be?"

"Perhaps your uncle, the admiral," said the husband, with a slight peevishness in his accent. "He generally favors us about this hour."

"I hope, my love, that none of my relations are unwelcome visitors at your house. The admiral is a most entertaining man, and—his fortune is entirely at his own disposal."

"No one I respect more," said Mr. Mervale, with emphasis.

The servant threw open the door, and announced Mr. Glyndon.

"Mr. Glyndon! What an extraordinary—" exclaimed Mrs. Mervale, but before she could conclude the sentence, Glyndon was in the room.

The two friends greeted each other with all the warmth of early recollection and long absence. An appropriate and proud presentation to Mrs. Mervale ensued; and Mrs. Mervale, with a dignified smile, and a furtive glance at his boots, bade her husband's friend welcome to England.

Glyndon was greatly altered since Mervale had seen him last. Though less than two years had elapsed since then, his fair complexion was more bronzed and manly. Deep lines of care, or thought, or dissipation, had replaced the smooth contour of happy youth. To a manner once gentle and polished, had succeeded a certain recklessness of mien, tone, and bearing, which bespoke the habits of a society that cared little for the calm decorums of conventional ease. Still a kind of wild nobleness, not before apparent in him, characterized his aspect, and gave something of dignity to the freedom of his language and gestures.

"So, then, you are settled, Mervale, I need not ask you if you are happy. Worth, sense, wealth, character, and so fair a companion, deserve happiness, and command it."

"Would you like some tea, Mr. Glyndon?" asked Mrs. Mervale kindly.

"Thank you, no. I propose a more convivial stimulus to my old friend. Wine, Mervale—wine, eh! or a bowl of old English punch. Your wife will excuse us—we will make a night of it!"

Mrs. Mervale drew back her chair, and tried not to look aghast. Glyndon did not give his friend time to reply—

"So at last I am in England," he said, looking round the room, with a slight sneer on his lips; "surely this sober air must have its influence; surely here I shall be like the rest."

"Have you been ill, Glyndon?"

"Ill! yes. Humph! you have a fine house. Does it contain a spare room for a solitary wanderer?"

Mr. Mervale glanced at his wife, and his wife looked steadily on the carpet. "Modest and shy in his manners—rather too

much so!" Mrs. Mervale was in the seventh heaven of indignation and amaze!

"My dear?" said Mr. Mervale at last, meekly and interrogatingly.

"My dear!" returned Mrs. Mervale, innocently and sourly.

"We can make up a room for my old friend, Sarah?"

The old friend had sunk back on his chair; and, gazing intently on the fire, with his feet at ease upon the fender, seemed to have forgotten his question.

Mrs. Mervale bit her lips, looked thoughtful, and at last coldly replied: "Certainly, Mr. Mervale; your friends do right to make themselves at home."

With that she lighted a candle, and moved majestically from the room. When she returned, the two friends had vanished into Mr. Mervale's study.

Twelve o'clock struck—one o'clock—two! Thrice had Mrs. Mervale sent into the room to know, first, if they wanted anything; secondly, if Mr. Glyndon slept on a mattress or featherbed; thirdly, to inquire if Mr. Glyndon's trunk, which he had brought with him, should be unpacked. And to the answer to all these questions, was added, in a loud voice from the visitor—a voice that pierced from the kitchen to the attic—"Another bowl! Stronger, if you please, and be quick with it!"

At last, Mr. Mervale appeared in the conjugal chamber—not penitent, not apologetic—no, not a bit of it. His eyes twinkled, his cheek flushed, his feet reeled; he sung—Mr. Thomas Mervale positively sung!

"Mr. Mervale, is it possible, sir!—"

"'Old King Cole was a merry old soul—'"

"Mr. Mervale, sir—leave me alone, sir!"

"'And a merry old soul was he—'"

"What an example to the servants!"

"'And he called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl—'"

"If you don't behave yourself, sir, I shall call—"

"'Call for his fiddlers three!'"

CHAPTER III.

"In der Welt weit
Aus der Einsamkeit
Wollen sie Dich locken."*—*Faust.*

THE next morning, at breakfast, Mrs. Mervale looked as if all the wrongs of injured woman sat upon her brow. Mr. Mer-

* In the wide world, out of the solitude, will these allure thee.

vale seemed the picture of remorseful guilt and avenging bile. He said little, except to complain of headache, and to request the eggs to be removed from the table. Clarence Glyndon, impervious, unconscious, unailing, impenitent, was in noisy spirits and talked for three.

"Poor Mervale! he has lost the habit of good fellowship, madam. Another night or two, and he will be himself again!"

"Sir," said Mrs. Mervale, launching a premeditated sentence with more than Johnsonian dignity; "permit me to remind you that Mr. Mervale is now a married man, the destined father of a family, and the present master of a household."

"Precisely the reasons why I envy him so much. I myself have a great mind to marry. Happiness is contagious."

"Do you still take to painting?" asked Mervale languidly, endeavoring to turn the tables on his guest.

"Oh, no; I have adopted your advice. No art, no ideal, nothing loftier than Commonplace for me now. If I were to paint again, I positively think *you* would purchase my pictures. Make haste and finish your breakfast, man; I wish to consult you. I have come to England to see after my affairs. My ambition is to make money; your counsels and experience cannot fail to assist me here."

"Ah, you were soon disenchanted of your Philosopher's stone. You must know, Sarah, that when I last left Glyndon, he was bent upon turning alchemist and magician."

"You are witty to-day, Mr. Mervale."

"Upon my honor, it is true. I told you so before."

Glyndon rose abruptly.

"Why revive those recollections of folly and presumption. Have I not said that I have returned to my native land to pursue the healthful avocations of my kind! Oh yes! What so healthful, so noble, so fitted to our nature, as what you call the Practical Life? If we have faculties, what is their use, but to sell them to advantage? Buy knowledge as we do our goods; buy it at the cheapest market, sell it at the dearest. Have you not breakfasted yet?"

The friends walked into the streets, and Mervale shrunk from the irony with which Glyndon complimented him on his respectability, his station, his pursuits, his happy marriage, and his eight pictures in their handsome frames. Formerly the sober Mervale had commanded an influence over his friend; *his* had been the sarcasm; Glyndon's the irresolute shame at his own peculiarities. Now this position was reversed. There was a fierce earnestness in Glyndon's altered temper which

awed and silenced the quiet commonplace of his friend's character. He seemed to take a malignant delight in persuading himself that the sober life of the world was contemptible and base.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "how right you were to tell me to marry respectably; to have a solid position; to live in decorous fear of the world and one's wife; and to command the envy of the poor, the good opinion of the rich. You have practiced what you preach. Delicious existence! The merchant's desk, and the curtain lecture! Ha! ha! Shall we have another night of it?"

Mervale, embarrassed and irritated, turned the conversation upon Glyndon's affairs. He was surprised at the knowledge of the world which the artist seemed to have suddenly acquired; surprised still more at the acuteness and energy with which he spoke of the speculations most in vogue at the market. Yes; Glyndon was certainly in earnest; he desired to be rich and respectable, and to make at least ten per cent. for his money!

After spending some days with the merchant, during which time he contrived to disorganize all the mechanism of the house, to turn night into day, harmony into discord, to drive poor Mrs. Mervale half distracted, and to convince her husband that he was horribly henpecked, the ill-omened visitor left them as suddenly as he had arrived. He took a house of his own; he sought the society of persons of substance; he devoted himself to the money-market; he seemed to have become a man of business; his schemes were bold and colossal; his calculations rapid and profound. He startled Mervale by his energy, and dazzled him by his success. Mervale began to envy him; to be discontented with his own regular and slow gains. When Glyndon bought or sold in the funds, wealth rolled upon him like the tide of a sea; what years of toil could not have done for him in art, a few months, by a succession of lucky chances, did for him in speculation. Suddenly, however, he relaxed his exertions; new objects of ambition seemed to attract him. If he heard a drum in the streets, what glory like the soldier's? If a new poem were published, what renown like the poet's? He began works in literature, which promised great excellence, to throw them aside in disgust. All at once he abandoned the decorous and formal society he had courted; he joined himself with young and riotous associates; he plunged into the wildest excesses of the great city, where Gold reigns alike over Toil and Pleasure. Through all, he

carried with him a certain power and heat of soul. In all society he aspired to command, in all pursuits to excel. Yet whatever the passion of the moment, the reaction was terrible in its gloom. He sunk, at times, into the most profound and the darkest reveries. His fever was that of a mind that would escape memory, his repose that of a mind which the memory seizes again, and devours as a prey. Mervale now saw little of him; they shunned each other. Glyndon had no confidant, and no friend.

CHAPTER IV.

"Ich fühle Dich mir nahe,
Die Einsamkeit belebt;
Wie über seinen Welten
Der Unsichtbare schwebt.*"—UHLAND.

FROM this state of restlessness and agitation rather than continuous action, Glyndon was aroused by a visitor who seemed to exercise the most salutary influence over him. His sister, an orphan with himself, had resided in the country with her aunt. In the early years of hope and home, he had loved this girl, much younger than himself, with all a brother's tenderness. On his return to England, he had seemed to forget her existence. She recalled herself to him on her aunt's death by a touching and melancholy letter; she had now no home but his, no dependence save on his affection; he wept when he read it, and was impatient till Adela arrived.

This girl, then about eighteen, concealed beneath a gentle and calm exterior much of the romance or enthusiasm that had, at her own age, characterized her brother. But her enthusiasm was of a far purer order, and was restrained within proper bounds, partly by the sweetness of a very feminine nature, and partly by a strict and methodical education. She differed from him especially in a timidity of character which exceeded that usual at her age, but which the habit of self-command concealed no less carefully than that timidity itself concealed the romance I have ascribed to her.

Adela was not handsome; she had the complexion and the form of delicate health; and too fine an organization of the nerves rendered her susceptible to every impression that could influence the health of the frame through the sympathy of the mind. But as she never complained, and as the singular

* I feel thee near to me;
The loneliness takes life—
As over its world
The Invisible hovers.

serenity of her manners seemed to betoken an equanimity of temperament which, with the vulgar, might have passed for indifference, her sufferings had so long been borne unnoticed, that it ceased to be an effort to disguise them. Though, as I have said, not handsome, her countenance was interesting and pleasing ; and there was that caressing kindness, that winning charm about her smile, her manners, her anxiety to please, to comfort, and to soothe, which went at once to the heart, and made her lovely, because so loving.

Such was the sister whom Glyndon had so long neglected, and whom he now so cordially welcomed. Adela had passed many years a victim to the caprices, and a nurse to the maladies, of a selfish and exacting relation. The delicate, and generous, and respectful affection of her brother was no less new to her than delightful. He took pleasure in the happiness he created ; he gradually weaned himself from other society ; he felt the Charm of Home. It is not surprising, then, that this young creature, free and virgin from every more ardent attachment, concentrated all her grateful love on this cherished and protecting relative. Her study by day, her dream by night, was to repay him for his affection. She was proud of his talents, devoted to his welfare ; the smallest trifle that could interest him swelled in her eyes to the gravest affairs of life. In short, all the long-hoarded enthusiasm which was her perilous and only heritage, she invested in this one object of her holy tenderness, her pure ambition.

But in proportion as Glyndon shunned those excitements by which he had so long sought to occupy his time, or distract his thoughts, the gloom of his calmer hours became deeper and more continuous. He ever and especially dreaded to be alone ; he could not bear his new companion to be absent from his eyes ; he rode with her, walked with her, and it was with visible reluctance, which almost partook of horror, that he retired to rest at an hour when even revel grows fatiguing. This gloom was not that which could be called by the soft name of melancholy—it was far more intense ; it seemed rather like despair. Often after a silence as of death, so heavy, abstracted, motionless did it appear, he would start abruptly, and cast hurried glances around him, his limbs trembling, his lips livid, his brows bathed in dew. Convinced that some secret sorrow preyed upon his mind, and would consume his health, it was the dearest as the most natural desire of Adela to become his confidante and consoler. She observed, with the quick tact of the delicate, that he disliked her to seem affected by, or even

sensible of, his darker moods. She schooled herself to suppress her fears, and her feelings. She would not ask his confidence; she sought to steal into it. By little and little she felt that she was succeeding. Too wrapped in his own strange existence to be acutely observant of the character of others, Glyndon mistook the self-content of a generous and humble affection for constitutional fortitude; and this quality pleased and soothed him. It is fortitude that the diseased mind requires in the confidant whom it selects as its physician. And how irresistible is that desire to communicate! How often the lonely man thought to himself, "My heart would be lightened of its misery, if once confessed!" He felt, too, that in the very youth, the inexperience, the poetical temperament of Adela, he could find one who would comprehend and bear with him better than any sterner and more practical nature. Mervale would have looked on his revelations as the ravings of madness, and most men, at best, as the sicklied chimeras, the optical delusions, of disease. Thus gradually preparing himself for that relief for which he yearned, the moment for his disclosure arrived thus:

One evening, as they sat alone together, Adela, who inherited some portion of her brother's talent in art, was employed in drawing, and Glyndon, rousing himself from meditations less gloomy than usual, rose, and affectionately passing his arm round her waist, looked over her as she sat. An exclamation of dismay broke from his lips; he snatched the drawing from her hand: "What are you about? What portrait is this?"

"Dear Clarence, do you not remember the original? It is a copy from that portrait of our wise ancestor which our poor mother used to say so strongly resembled you. I thought it would please you if I copied it from memory."

"Accursed was the likeness!" said Glyndon gloomily. "Guess you not the reason why I have shunned to return to the home of my fathers? Because I dreaded to meet that portrait! Because—because—but pardon me—I alarm you!"

"Ah, no—no, Clarence, you never alarm me when you speak, only when you are silent! Oh, if you thought me worthy of your trust! Oh, if you had given me the right to reason with you in the sorrows that I yearn to share!"

Glyndon made no answer, but paced the room for some moments with disordered strides. He stopped at last, and gazed at her earnestly. "Yes, you, too, are his descendant! You know that such men have lived and suffered; you will not

mock me; you will not disbelieve! Listen! Hark! What sound is that?"

"But the wind on the house-top, Clarence—but the wind."

"Give me your hand; let me feel its living clasp, and when I have told you, never revert to the tale again. Conceal it from all—swear that it shall die with us, the last of our predestined race!"

"Never will I betray your trust; I swear it—never!" said Adela firmly; and she drew closer to his side: Then Glyndon commenced his story. That which, perhaps in writing and to minds prepared to question and disbelieve, may seem cold and terrorless, became far different when told by those blanched lips, with all that truth of suffering which convinces and appals. Much, indeed, he concealed, much he involuntarily softened; but he revealed enough to make his tale intelligible and distinct to his pale and trembling listener. "At daybreak," he said, "I left that unhallowed and abhorred abode. I had one hope still—I would seek Mejnour through the world. I would force him to lay at rest the fiend that haunted my soul. With this intent I journeyed from city to city. I instituted the most vigilant researches through the police of Italy. I even employed the services of the Inquisition at Rome, which had lately asserted its ancient powers in the trial of the less dangerous Cagliostro. All was in vain; not a trace of him could be discovered. I was not alone, Adela." Here Glyndon paused a moment, as if embarrassed; for in his recital, I need scarcely say that he had only indistinctly alluded to Fillide, whom the reader may surmise to be his companion. "I was not alone, but the associate of my wanderings was not one in whom my soul could confide—faithful and affectionate, but without education, without faculties to comprehend me, with natural instincts rather than cultivated reason, one in whom the heart might lean in its careless hours, but with whom the mind could have no commune, in whom the bewildered spirit could seek no guide. Yet in the society of this person the dæmon troubled me not. Let me explain yet more fully the dread conditions of its presence. In coarse excitement, in commonplace life, in the wild riot, in the fierce excess, in the torpid lethargy of that animal existence which we share with the brutes, its eyes were invisible, its whisper was unheard. But whenever the soul would aspire; whenever the imagination kindled to the loftier ends; whenever the consciousness of our proper destiny struggled against the unworthy life I pursued, then, Adela, then, it cowered by my side in the light of noon,

or sat by my bed—a Darkness visible through the Dark. If, in the galleries of Divine Art, the dreams of my youth woke the early emulation; if I turned to the thoughts of sages; if the example of the great, if the converse of the wise, aroused the silenced intellect, the dæmon was with me as by a spell. At last, one evening, at Genoa, to which city I had travelled in pursuit of the Mystic, suddenly, and when least expected, he appeared before me. It was the time of the Carnival. It was in one of those half-frantic scenes of noise and revel, call it not gayety, which establish a heathen saturnalia in the midst of a Christian festival. Wearied with the dance, I had entered a room in which several revellers were seated, drinking, singing, shouting; and in their fantastic dresses and hideous masks, their orgies seemed scarcely human. I placed myself amongst them, and in that fearful excitement of the spirits which the happy never know, I was soon the most riotous of all. The conversation fell on the Revolution of France, which had always possessed for me an absorbing fascination. The masks spoke of the millennium it was to bring on earth, not as philosophers rejoicing in the advent of light, but as ruffians exulting in the annihilation of law. I know not why it was, but their licentious language infected myself; and, always desirous to be foremost in every circle, I soon exceeded even these rioters in declamations on the nature of the liberty which was about to embrace all the families of the globe: a liberty that should pervade not only public legislation, but domestic life: an emancipation from every fetter that men had forged for themselves. In the midst of this tirade one of the masks whispered me:

"'Take care. One listens to you, who seems to be a spy!'

"My eyes followed those of the mask, and I observed a man who took no part in the conversation, but whose gaze was bent upon me. He was disguised like the rest, yet I found by a general whisper that none had observed him enter. His silence, his attention, had alarmed the fears of the other revellers—they only excited me the more. Rapt in my subject, I pursued it, insensible to the signs of those about me; and, addressing myself only to the silent mask who sat alone, apart from the group, I did not even observe that, one by one, the revellers slunk off, and that I and the silent listener were left alone, until, pausing from my heated and impetuous declamations, I said:

"'And you, Signor,—what is your view of this mighty era?

Opinion without persecution ; brotherhood without jealousy ; love without bondage—'

"'And life without God,' added the mask, as I hesitated for new images.

"The sound of that well-known voice changed the current of my thought. I sprung forward, and cried :

"'Impostor or Fiend, we meet at last!'

"The figure rose as I advanced, and, unmasking, showed the features of Mejnour. His fixed eye, his majestic aspect, awed and repelled me. I stood rooted to the ground.

"'Yes,' he said solemnly, 'we meet, and it is this meeting that I have sought. How hast thou followed my admonitions? Are these the scenes in which the Aspirant for the Serene Science thinks to escape the Ghastly Enemy? Do the thoughts thou hast uttered—thoughts that would strike all order from the universe—express the hopes of the sage who would rise to the Harmony of the Eternal Spheres?'

"'It is thy fault—it is thine!' I exclaimed. 'Exorcise the phantom! Take the haunting terror from my soul!'

"Mejnour looked at me a moment with a cold and cynical disdain, which provoked at once my fear and rage, and replied :

"'No, fool of thine own senses! No ; thou must have full and entire experience of the illusions to which the Knowledge that is without Faith climbs its Titan way. Thou pantest for this millennium—thou shalt behold it! Thou shalt be one of the agents of the era of Light and Reason. I see, while I speak, the Phantom thou fliest, by thy side! It marshals thy path ; it has power over thee as yet—a power that defies my own. In the last days of that Revolution which thou hailest, amidst the wrecks of the Order thou cursest as Oppression, seek the fulfilment of thy destiny and await thy cure.'

"At that instant a troop of masks, clamorous, intoxicated, reeling, and rushing as they reeled, poured into the room, and separated me from the Mystic. I broke through them, and sought him everywhere, but in vain. All my researches the next day were equally fruitless. Weeks were consumed in the same pursuit—not a trace of Mejnour could be discovered. Wearied with false pleasures, roused by reproaches I had deserved, recoiling from Mejnour's prophecy of the scene in which I was to seek deliverance, it occurred to me, at last, that in the sober air of my native country, and amidst its orderly and vigorous pursuits, I might work out my own emancipation from the spectre. I left all whom I had before courted and clung to : I came hither. Amidst mercenary schemes and

selfish speculations, I found the same relief as in debauch and excess. The Phantom was invisible, but these pursuits soon became to me distasteful as the rest. Ever and ever I felt that I was born for something nobler than the greed of gain, that life may be made equally worthless, and the soul equally degraded by the icy lust of Avarice, as by the noisier passions. A higher Ambition never ceased to torment me. But, but," continued Glyndon, with a whitening lip and a visible shudder, "at every attempt to rise into loftier existence came that hideous form. It gloomed beside me at the easel. Before the volumes of Poet and Sage it stood with its burning eyes in the stillness of night, and I thought I heard its horrible whispers uttering temptations never to be divulged." He paused, and the drops stood upon his brow.

"But I," said Adela mastering her fears, and throwing her arms around him; "But I henceforth will have no life but in thine. And in this love so pure, so holy, thy terror shall fade away."

"No, no!" exclaimed Glyndon, starting from her. "The worst revelation is to come. Since thou hast been here; since I have sternly and resolutely refrained from every haunt, every scene in which this preternatural enemy troubled me not, I—I—have—Oh, heaven! Mercy—mercy! There it stands—there, by thy side—there—there!" And he fell to the ground insensible.

CHAPTER V.

"Doch wunderbar ergriff mich's diese Nacht;
Die Glieder schienen schon in Todes Macht."*
—UHLAND.

A FEVER, attended with delirium, for several days deprived Glyndon of consciousness; and when, by Adela's care, more than the skill of the physicians, he was restored to life and reason, he was unutterably shocked by the change in his sister's appearance; at first, he fondly imagined that her health, affected by her vigils, would recover with his own. But he soon saw, with an anguish which partook of remorse, that the malady was deep-seated—deep, deep beyond the reach of Æsculapius and his drugs. Her imagination, little less lively than his own, was awfully impressed by the strange confessions she had heard, by the ravings of his delirium. Again and again, had he shrieked forth: "It is there—there—by thy side, my

* This night it fearfully seized on me; my limbs appeared already in the power of death.

sister!" He had transferred to her fancy the spectre, and the horror that cursed himself. He perceived this, not by her words, but her silence, by the eyes that strained into space, by the shiver that came over her frame, by the start of terror, by the look that did not dare to turn behind. Bitterly he repented his confession; bitterly he felt that between his sufferings and human sympathy, there could be no gentle and holy commune; vainly he sought to retract; to undo what he had done; to declare all was but the chimera of an overheated brain.

And brave and generous was this denial of himself; for, often and often, as he thus spoke, he saw the Thing of Dread gliding to her side, and glaring at him as he disowned its being. But what chilled him, if possible, yet more than her wasting form and trembling nerves, was the change in her love for him; a natural terror had replaced it. She turned paler if he approached; she shuddered if he took her hand. Divided from the rest of earth, the gulf of the foul remembrance yawned now between his sister and himself. He could endure no more the presence of the one whose life *his* life had embittered. He made some excuses for departure, and writhed to see that they were greeted eagerly. The first gleam of joy he had detected since that fatal night, on Adela's face, he beheld when he murmured "Farewell." He travelled for some weeks through the wildest parts of Scotland; scenery, which *makes* the artist, was loveless to his haggard eyes. A letter recalled him to London, on the wings of new agony and fear; he arrived to find his sister in a condition both of mind and health which exceeded his worst apprehensions.

Her vacant look, her lifeless posture, appalled him; it was as one who gazed on the Medusa's head, and felt, without a struggle, the human being gradually harden to the statue. It was not frenzy, it was not idiotcy; it was an abstraction, an apathy, a sleep in waking. Only as the night advanced towards the eleventh hour—the hour in which Glyndon had concluded his tale—she grew vividly uneasy, anxious, and perturbed. Then her lips muttered, her hands writhed; she looked round with a look of unspeakable appeal for succor, for protection; and suddenly, as the clock struck, fell with a shriek to the ground, cold and lifeless. With difficulty, and not until after the most earnest prayers, did she answer the agonized questions of Glyndon; at last she owned that at that hour, and that hour alone, wherever she was placed, however occupied, she distinctly beheld the apparition of an old hag; who, after thrice knocking at the door, entered the room, and

hobbling up to her with a countenance distorted by hideous rage and menace, laid its icy fingers on her forehead; from that moment she declared that sense forsook her; and when she woke again, it was only to wait, in suspense that froze up her blood, the repetition of the ghastly visitation.

The physician who had been summoned before Glyndon's return, and whose letter had recalled him to London, was a commonplace practitioner; ignorant of the case, and honestly anxious that one more experienced should be employed. Clarence called in one of the most eminent of the faculty, and to him he recited the optical delusion of his sister. The physician listened attentively, and seemed sanguine in his hopes of cure. He came to the house two hours before the one so dreaded by the patient. He had quietly arranged that the clocks should be put forward half an hour, unknown to Adela, and even to her brother. He was a man of the most extraordinary powers of conversation, of surpassing wit, of all the faculties that interest and amuse. He first administered to the patient a harmless potion, which he pledged himself would dispel the delusion. His confident tone woke her own hopes; he continued to excite her attention, to rouse her lethargy; he jested, he laughed away the time. The hour struck. "Joy, my brother!" she exclaimed, throwing herself in his arms; "the time is past!" And then, like one released from a spell, she suddenly assumed more than her ancient cheerfulness. "Ah, Clarence!" she whispered, "forgive me tor my former desertion—forgive me that I feared *you*. I shall live—I shall live! in my turn to banish the spectre that haunts my brother!" And Clarence smiled and wiped the tears from his burning eyes. The physician renewed his stories, his jests. In the midst of a stream of rich humor, that seemed to carry away both brother and sister, Glyndon suddenly saw over Adela's face the same fearful change, the same anxious look, the same restless, straining eye, he had beheld the night before. He rose—he approached her. Adela started up. "Look—look—look!" she exclaimed. "She comes! Save me—save me!" and she fell at his feet in strong convulsions; as the clock, falsely and in vain put back, struck the half-hour.

The physician lifted her in his arms. "My worst fears are confirmed," he said gravely; "the disease is epilepsy." *

The next night at the same hour Adela Glyndon died.

* The most celebrated practitioner in Dublin related to the Editor a story of optical delusion, precisely similar in its circumstances and its physical cause, to the one here narrated.

CHAPTER VI.

"La loi dont le règne vous épouvante a son glaive levé sur vous : elle vous frappera tous ; le genre humain a besoin de cet exemple." *—COUTHON.

"OH, joy, joy! thou art come again! This is thy hand, these thy lips. Say that thou didst not desert me from the love of another; say it again—say it ever! and I will pardon thee all the rest!"

"So thou hast mourned for me?"

"Mourned! And thou wert cruel enough to leave me gold—there it is—there—untouched!"

"Poor child of Nature! How, then, in this strange town of Marseilles, hast thou found bread and shelter?"

"Honestly, soul of my soul! honestly, but yet by the face thou didst once think so fair: thinkest thou *that* now?"

"Yes, Fillide, more fair than ever. But what meanest thou?"

"There is a painter here: a great man, one of their great men at Paris; I know not what they call them; but he rules over all here—life and death; and he has paid me largely but to sit for my portrait. It is for a picture to be given to the Nation, for he paints only for glory. Think of thy Fillide's renown!" And the girl's wild eyes sparkled; her vanity was roused. "And he would have married me if I would! Divorced his wife to marry me! But I waited for thee, ungrateful!"

A knock at the door was heard; a man entered.

"Nicot!"

"Ah, Glyndon! Hum! Welcome! What! thou art twice my rival! But Jean Nicot bears no malice. Virtue is my dream, my country, my mistress. Serve my country, citizen; and I forgive thee the preference of beauty. *Ça ira! ça ira!*"

But as the painter spoke, it hymned, it rolled through the the streets—the fiery song of the Marseillaise! There was a crowd, a multitude, a people up, abroad, with colors and arms, enthusiasm and song; with song, with enthusiasm, with colors and arms. And who could guess that that martial movement was one, not of war, but massacre—Frenchmen against Frenchmen? For their are two parties in Marseilles—and ample work for Jourdan Coupe-tête! But this, the Englishman, just arrived, a stranger to all factions, did not as yet comprehend. He comprehended nothing but the song, the enthusiasm,

* The law, whose reign terrifies you, has its sword raised against you; it will strike you all; humanity has need of this example.

the arms, and the colors that lifted to the sun the glorious lie : *Le peuple Français debout contre les tyrans!*" *

The dark brow of the wretched wanderer grew animated; he gazed from the window on the throng that marched below, beneath their waving Oriflamme. They shouted as they beheld the patriot Nicot, the friend of Liberty and relentless Hébert, by the stranger's side, at the casement.

"Ay, shout again!" cried the painter; "shout for the brave Englishman who abjures his Pitts and his Coburgs to be a citizen of Liberty and France!"

A thousand voices rent the air, and the hymn of the Marseillaise rose in majesty again.

"Well, and if it be among these high hopes and this brave people that the phantom is to vanish, and the cure to come!" muttered Glyndon; and he thought he felt again the elixir sparkling through his veins.

"Thou shalt be one of the Convention with Paine and Clootz—I will manage it all for thee!" cried Nicot, slapping him on the shoulder; "and Paris—"

"Ah, if I could but see Paris!" cried Fillide, in her joyous voice. Joyous! the whole time, the town, the air—save where, unheard, rose the cry of agony and the yell of murder—were joy! Sleep unhaunting in thy grave, cold Adela. Joy, joy! In the Jubilee of Humanity all private griefs should cease! Behold, wild Mariner, the vast whirlpool draws thee to its stormy bosom. There, the individual is not. All things are of the whole! Open thy gates, fair Paris, for the stranger-citizen! Receive in your ranks, O meek Republicans, the new champion of liberty, of reason, of mankind! "Mejnour is right; it was in virtue, in valor, in glorious struggle for the human race, that the spectre was to shrink to her kindred darkness."

And Nicot's shrill voice praised him; and lean Robespierre—"Flambeau, colonne, pierre angulaire de l'édifice de la République" †—smiled ominously on him from his bloodshot eyes; and Fillide clasped him with passionate arms to her tender breast. And at his up-rising and down-sitting, at board and in bed, though he saw it not, the Nameless One guided him with the dæmon eyes to the sea, whose waves were gore.

* Up, Frenchmen, against tyrants.

† "The light, column, and keystone of the Republic." Lettre du Citoyen P——, Papiers inédits trouves chez Robespierre.—Tom. II, p. 127.

BOOK VI.—SUPERSTITION DESERTING FAITH.

"Why do I yield to that suggestion,
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair?"
—SHAKESPEARE.

CHAPTER I.

"Therefore the Genii were painted with a platter full of garlands and flowers in one hand, and a whip in the other."—ALEXANDER ROSS, *Mystag. Poet.*

ACCORDING to the order of the events related in this narrative, the departure of Zanoni and Viola from the Greek Isle, in which two happy years appear to have been passed, must have been somewhat later in date than the arrival of Glyndon at Marseilles. It must have been in the course of the year 1791 when Viola fled from Naples with her mysterious lover, and when Glyndon sought Mejnour in the fatal Castle. It is now towards the close of 1793, when our story again returns to Zanoni. The stars of winter shone down on the Lagunes of Venice. The hum of the Rialto was hushed, the last loiterers had deserted the place of St. Mark's, and only at distant intervals might be heard the oars of the rapid gondolas, bearing reveller or lover to his home. But lights still flitted to and fro across the windows of one of the Palladian palaces, whose shadow slept in the great canal; and within the Palace watched the twin Eumenides, that never sleep for Man,—Fear, and Pain.

"I will make thee the richest man in all Venice, if thou savest her."

"Signor," said the leech; "your gold cannot control death, and the will of Heaven; Signor, unless within the next hour there is some blessed change, prepare your courage."

Ho, ho, Zanoni! Man of mystery and might, who hast walked amidst the passions of the world, with no changes on thy brow, art thou tossed at last upon the billows of tempestuous fear? Does thy spirit reel to and fro? Knowest thou at last the strength and the majesty of Death?

He fled, trembling, from the pale-faced man of art—fled through stately hall, and long-drawn corridor, and gained a remote chamber in the Palace, which other step than his was not permitted to profane. Out with thy herbs and vessels. Break from the enchanted elements, Oh silvery, azure flame!

Why comes he not—the Son of the Starbeam! Why is Adon-Ai deaf to thy solemn call? It comes not—the luminous and delightsome Presence! Cabalist, are thy charms in vain? Has thy throne vanished from the realms of space? Thou standest pale and trembling. Pale trembler, not thus didst thou look, when the things of glory gathered at thy spell! Never to the pale trembler bow the things of glory: the soul, and not the herbs, nor the silvery azure flame, nor the spells of the Cabala, commands the children of the air; and *thy* soul, by Love and Death, is made sceptreless and discrowned!

At length the flame quivers; the air grows cold as the wind in charnels. A thing not of earth is present—a mistlike, formless thing. It cowers in the distance—a silent Horror! It rises—it creeps—it nears thee—dark in its mantle of dusky haze; and under its veil it looks on thee with its livid, malignant eyes—the thing of malignant eyes!

"Ha, young Chaldæan! young in thy countless ages—young as when, cold to pleasure and to beauty, thou stoodest on the old Fire-tower, and heardest the starry silence whisper to thee the last mystery that baffles Death, fearest thou Death at length! Is thy knowledge but a circle that brings thee back whence thy wanderings began! Generations on generations have withered since we two met! Lo! thou beholdest me now!"

"But I behold thee without fear! Though beneath thine eyes thousands have perished; though, where they burn, spring up the foul poisons of the human heart, and to those whom thou canst subject to thy will, thy presence glares in the dreams of the raving maniac, or blackens the dungeon of despairing crime, thou art not my vanquisher, but my slave!"

"And as a slave will I serve thee! Command thy slave, O beautiful Chaldæan! Hark, the wail of women! Hark, the sharp shriek of thy beloved one! Death is in thy palace! Adon-Ai comes not to thy call. Only where no cloud of the passion and the flesh veils the eye of the Serene Intelligence can the Sons of the Starbeam glide to man. But *I* can aid thee! Hark!" And Zanoni heard distinctly in his heart, even at that distance from the chamber, the voice of Viola, calling in delirium on her beloved one.

"Oh, Viola, I can save thee not!" exclaimed the Seer passionately. My love for thee has made me powerless!"

"Not powerless; I can gift thee with the art to save her, I can place healing in thy hand!"

"For both? child and mother—for both?"

"Both!"

A convulsion shook the limbs of the Seer—a mighty struggle shook him as a child: the Humanity and the Hour conquered the repugnant spirit.

"I yield! Mother and child—save both!"

* * * * * * *

In the dark chamber lay Viola, in the sharpest agonies of travail; life seemed rending itself away in the groans and cries that spoke of pain in the midst of frenzy; and still, in groan and cry, she called on Zanoni, her beloved. The physician looked to the clock; on it beat—the Heart of Time—regularly and slowly—Heart that never sympathized with Life, and never flagged for Death! "The cries are fainter," said the leech; "in ten minutes more all will be past."

Fool! the minutes laugh at thee; Nature even now, like a blue sky through a shattered temple, is smiling through the tortured frame. The breathing grows more calm and hushed, the voice of delirium is dumb, a sweet dream has come to Viola. Is it a dream, or is it the soul that sees? She thinks suddenly that she is with Zanoni, that her burning head is pillowed on his bosom; she thinks, as he gazes on her, that his eyes dispel the tortures that pray upon her; the touch of his hand cools the fever on her brow; she hears his voice in murmurs—it is a music from which the fiends fly. Where is the mountain that seemed to press upon her temples? Like a vapor, it rolls away. In the frosts of the winter night she sees the sun laughing in luxurious heaven; she hears the whisper of green leaves; the beautiful world, valley, and stream, and woodland, lie before her, and with a common voice speak to her—"We are not yet past for thee!" Fool of drugs and formula, look to thy dial-plate!—the hand has moved on; the minutes are with Eternity; the soul thy sentence would have dismissed still dwells on the shores of Time. She sleeps; the fever abates; the convulsions are gone; the living rose blooms upon her cheek; the crisis is past! Husband, thy wife lives! Lover, thy universe is no solitude. Heart of Time, beat on! A while—a little while—joy! joy! joy! Father, embrace thy child!

CHAPTER II.

"Tristis Erinnys
Prætulit infaustas sanguinolenta faces." *—OVID.

AND they placed the child in the father's arms! As silently he bent over it, tears—tears how human!—fell from his eyes like

* Erinnys, doleful and bloody, extends the unblessed torches.

rain! And the little one smiled through the tears that bathed its cheeks! Ah, with what happy tears we welcome the stranger into our sorrowing world! With what agonizing tears we dismiss the stranger back to the angels! Unselfish joy; but how selfish is the sorrow!

And now through the silent chamber a faint, sweet voice is heard—the young mother's voice.

"I am here: I am by thy side!" murmured Zanoni.

The mother smiled, and clasped his hand, and asked no more; she was contented.

* * * * * * *

Viola recovered with a rapidity that startled the physician; and the young stranger thrived as if it already loved the world to which it had descended. From that hour Zanoni seemed to live in the infant's life; and in that life the souls of mother and father met as in a new bond. Nothing more beautiful than this infant had eye ever dwelt upon. It was strange to the nurses that it came not wailing to the light, but smiled to the light as a thing familiar to it before. It never uttered one cry of childish pain. In its very repose it seemed to be listening to some happy voice within its heart: it seemed itself so happy. In its eyes you would have thought intellect already kindled, though it had not yet found a language. Already it seemed to recognize its parents; already it stretched forth its arms when Zanoni bent over the bed, in which it breathed and bloomed,—the budding flower! And from that bed he was rarely absent: gazing upon it with his serene, delighted eyes, his soul seemed to feed its own. At night and in utter darkness he was still there; and Viola often heard him murmuring over it as she lay in a half sleep. But the murmur was in a language strange to her; and sometimes when she heard, she feared, and vague, undefined superstitions came back to her—the superstitions of earlier youth. A mother fears everything, even the gods, for her newborn. The mortals shrieked aloud, when of old they saw the great Demeter seeking to make their child immortal!

But Zanoni, wrapt in the sublime designs that animated the human love to which he was now awakened, forgot all, even all he had forfeited or incurred, in the love that blinded him.

But the dark, formless thing, though he nor invoked nor saw it, crept, often, round and round him; and often sat by the infant's couch, with its hateful eyes.

CHAPTER III.

"Fuscis tellurem amplectitur alis." *—VIRGIL.

LETTER FROM ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

MEJNOUR, Humanity, with all its sorrows and its joys, is mine once more. Day by day, I am forging my own fetters. I live in other lives than my own, and in them I have lost more than half my empire. Not lifting them aloft, they drag me by the strong bands of the affections to their own earth. Exiled from the beings only visible to the most abstract sense, the grim Enemy that guards the Threshold has entangled me in its web. Canst thou credit me, when I tell thee that I have accepted its gifts, and endure the forfeit. Ages must pass ere the brighter beings can again obey the spirit that has bowed to the ghastly one! And—

* * * * * * *

In this hope, then, Mejnour, I triumph still; I yet have supreme power over this young life. Insensibly and inaudibly my soul speaks to its own, and prepares it even now. Thou knowest that for the pure and unsullied infant spirit, the ordeal has no terror and no peril. Thus unceasingly I nourish it with no unholy light; and ere it yet be conscious of the gift, it will gain the privileges it has been mine to attain: the child, by slow and scarce-seen degrees, will communicate its own attributes to the mother; and content to see Youth forever radiant on the brows of the two that now suffice to fill up my whole infinity of thought, shall I regret the airier kingdom, that vanishes hourly from my grasp? But thou, whose vision is still clear and serene, look into the far deeps shut from my gaze, and counsel me, or forewarn! I know that the gifts of the Being whose race is so hostile to our own are, to the common seeker, fatal and perfidious as itself. And hence, when, at the outskirts of knowledge, which in earlier ages men called Magic, they encountered the things of the hostile tribes, they believed the apparitions to be fiends, and, by fancied compacts, imagined they had signed away their souls; as if man could give for an eternity that over which he has control but while he lives! Dark, and shrouded forever from human sight, dwell the dæmon rebels, in their impenetrable realm; in them is no breath of the Divine One. In every human creature the Divine One breathes; and He alone can judge His own hereafter, and allot its new career and home. Could man sell himself to the fiend,

* Embraces the Earth with gloomy wings.

man could prejudge himself, and arrogate the disposal of eternity! But these creatures, modifications as they are of matter, and some with more than the malignity of man, may well seem, to fear and unreasoning superstition, the representatives of fiends. And from the darkest and mightiest of them I have accepted a boon—the secret that startled Death from those so dear to me. Can I not trust that enough of power yet remains to me, to baffle or to daunt the Phantom, if it seek to pervert the gift? Answer me, Mejnour; for in the darkness that veils me, I see only the pure eyes of the newborn; I hear only the low beating of my heart. Answer me, thou whose wisdom is without love!

MEJNOUR TO ZANONI.

Rome.

FALLEN ONE! I see before thee, Evil and Death, and Woe! Thou to have relinquished Adon-Ai, for the nameless Terror—the heavenly stars, for those fearful eyes! Thou, at the last to be the victim of the Larva of the dreary Threshold, that, in thy first novitiate, fled, withered and shrivelled, from thy kingly brow! When, at the primary grades of initiation, the pupil I took from thee on the shores of the changed Parthenopé, fell senseless and cowering before that Phantom-Darkness, I knew that his spirit was not formed to front the worlds beyond; for FEAR is the attraction of man to earthiest earth; and while he fears, he cannot soar. But *thou*, seest thou not that to love is but to fear? Seest thou not, that the power of which thou boasted over the malignant one is already gone? It awes, it masters thee; it will mock thee, and betray. Lose not a moment; come to me. If there can yet be sufficient sympathy between us, through *my* eyes shalt thou see, and perhaps guard against the perils that, shapeless yet, and looming through the shadow, marshal themselves around thee and those whom thy very love has doomed. Come from all the ties of thy fond humanity; they will but obscure thy vision! Come forth from thy fears, and hopes, thy desires and passions. Come, as alone, Mind can be the monarch and the seer, shining through the home it tenants—a pure, impressionless, sublime intelligence!

CHAPTER IV.

"Plus que vous ne pensez ce moment est terrible." *
—LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, act 3, sc. 5.

FOR the first time since their union Zanoni and Viola were separated—Zanoni went to Rome, on important business. "It

* The moment is more terrible than you think.

was," he said, "but for a few days": and he went so suddenly that there was little time either for surprise or sorrow. But first parting is always more melancholy than it need be; it seems an interruption to the existence which Love shares with Love; it makes the heart feel what a void life will be, when the last parting shall succeed, as succeed it must, the first. But Viola had a new companion: she was enjoying that most delicious novelty which ever renews the youth, and dazzles the eyes, of woman. As the mistress—the wife—she leans on another; from another are reflected her happiness, her being—as an orb that takes light from its sun. But now, in turn, as the mother, she is raised from dependence into power; it is another that leans on her—a star has sprung into space, to which she herself has become the sun!

A few days—but they will be sweet through the sorrow! A few days—every hour of which seems an era to the infant, over whom bend watchful the eyes and the heart. From its waking to its sleep, from its sleep to its waking, is a revolution in Time. Every gesture to be noted, every smile to seem a new progress into the world it has come to bless! Zanoni has gone; the last dash of the oar is lost; the last speck of the gondola has vanished from the ocean-streets of Venice! Her infant is sleeping in the cradle at the mother's feet; and she thinks through her tears what tales of the fairy-land, that spreads far and wide, with a thousand wonders, in that narrow bed, she shall have to tell the father! Smile on, weep on, young mother! Already the fairest leaf in the wild volume is closed for thee! And the invisible finger turns the page!

* * * * * * *

By the bridge of the Rialto stood two Venetians, ardent Republicans and Democrats, looking to the Revolution of France as the earthquake which must shatter their own expiring and vicious constitution, and give equality of ranks and rights to Venice.

"Yes, Cottalto," said one; "my correspondent of Paris has promised to elude all obstacles, and baffle all danger. He will arrange with us the hour of revolt, when the legions of France shall be within hearing of our guns. One day in this week, at this hour, he is to meet me here. This is but the fourth day."

He had scarce said these words before a man, wrapped in his *roquelaire*, emerging from one of the narrow streets to the left, halted opposite the pair, and eyeing them for a few moments with an earnest scrutiny, whispered: "*Salut!*"

"*Et fraternité*," answered the speaker.

"You, then, are the brave Dandolo with whom the *Comité* deputed me to correspond? And this citizen—?"

"Is Cottalto, whom my letters have so often mentioned." *

"Health and brotherhood to him! I have much to impart to you both. I will meet you at night, Dandolo. But in the streets we may be observed."

"And I dare not appoint my own house; tyranny makes spies of our very walls. But the place herein designated is secure"; and he slipped an address into the hand of his correspondent.

"To-night, then, at nine! Meanwhile I have other business." The man paused, his color changed, and it was with an eager and passionate voice that he resumed:

"Your last letter mentioned this wealthy and mysterious visitor—this Zanoni. He is still at Venice?"

"I heard that he had left this morning; but his wife is still here."

"His wife! That is well!"

"What know you of him? Think you that he would join us? His wealth would be—"

"His house, his address—quick!" interrupted the man.

"The Palazzo di ——, on the Grand Canal."

"I thank you—at nine we meet."

The man hurried on through the street from which he had emerged; and, passing by the house in which he had taken up his lodging (he had arrived at Venice the night before), a woman who stood by the door caught his arm.

"Monsieur," she said in French, "I have been watching for your return. Do you understand me? I will brave all, risk all, to go back with you to France; to stand, through life or in death, by my husband's side!"

"Citoyenne, I promised your husband that, if such your choice, I would hazard my own safety to aid it. But, think again! Your husband is one of the faction which Robespierre's eyes have already marked: he cannot fly. All France is become a prison to the '*suspect*.' You do but endanger yourself by return. Frankly, citoyenne, the fate you would share may be the guillotine. I speak (as you know by his letter) as your husband bade me."

"Monsieur, I will return with you," said the woman, with a smile upon her pale face.

* I know not if the author of the original MSS. designs, under these names, to introduce the real Cottalto and the true Dandolo, who, in 1797, distinguished themselves by their sympathy with the French and their democratic ardor.—Ed.

"And yet, you deserted your husband in the fair sunshine of the Revolution, to return to him amidst its storms and thunder!" said the man, in a tone half of wonder, half rebuke.

"Because my father's days were doomed; because he had no safety but in flight to a foreign land; because he was old and penniless, and had none but me to work for him; because my husband was not then in danger, and my father was; *he* is dead—dead! My husband is in danger now. The daughter's duties are no more—the wife's return!"

"Be it so, citoyenne: on the third night I depart. Before then you may retract your choice."

"Never!"

A dark smile passed over the man's face.

"O guillotine!" he said, "how many virtues hast thou brought to light! Well may they call thee 'A Holy Mother,' O gory guillotine!"

He passed on, muttering to himself, hailed a gondola, and was soon amidst the crowded waters of the Grand Canal.

CHAPTER V.

"Ce que j'ignore
Est plus triste peut-être et plus affreux encore." *
—La Harpe, *Le Comte de Warwick*," act 5, sc. 1.

The casement stood open, and Viola was seated by it. Beneath sparkled the broad waters, in the cold but cloudless sunlight; and to that fair form, that half-averted face, turned the eyes of many a gallant cavalier, as their gondolas glided by.

But at last, in the centre of the canal, one of these dark vessels halted motionless, as a man fixed his gaze from its lattice upon that stately palace. He gave the word to the rowers, the vessel approached the marge. The stranger quitted the gondola; he passed up the broad stairs; he entered the palace. Weep on! Smile no more, young mother!—the last page is turned!

An attendant entered the room, and gave to Viola a card, with these words in English: "Viola, I must see you! Clarence Glyndon."

Oh, yes, how gladly Viola would see him! How gladly speak to him of her happiness—of Zanoni! How gladly show to him her child! Poor Clarence! she had forgotten him till now, as she had all the fever of her earlier life—its dreams, its

* That which I know not is, perhaps, more sad and fearful still,

vanities, its poor excitements, the lamps of the gaudy theatre, the applause of the noisy crowd.

He entered. She started to behold him, so changed were his gloomy brow, his resolute, careworn features, from the graceful form and careless countenance of the artist-lover. His dress, though not mean, was rude, neglected, and disordered. A wild, desperate, half-savage air had supplanted that ingenuous mien—diffident in its grace, earnest in its diffidence,—which had once characterized the young worshipper of Art, the dreaming Aspirant after some starrier lore!

"Is it you?" she said at last. "Poor Clarence, how changed!"

"Changed!" he said abruptly, as he placed himself by her side. "And whom am I to thank, but the fiends, the sorcerers, who have seized upon thy existence, as upon mine? Viola, hear me. A few weeks since, the news reached me that you were in Venice. Under other pretences, and through innumerable dangers, I have come hither, risking liberty, perhaps life, if my name and career are known in Venice, to warn and save you. Changed you call me! Changed without; but what is that to the ravages within? Be warned, be warned in time!"

The voice of Glyndon, sounding hollow and sepulchral, alarmed Viola even more than his words. Pale, haggard, emaciated, he seemed almost as one risen from the dead, to appall and awe her. "What," she said at last, in a faltering voice, "what wild words do you utter! Can you—"

"Listen!" interrupted Glyndon, laying his hand upon her arm, and its touch was as cold as death—"listen! You have heard of the old stories of men who have leagued themselves with devils for the attainment of preternatural powers. Those stories are not fables. Such men live. Their delight is to increase the unhallowed circle of wretches like themselves. If their proselytes fail in the ordeal, the dæmon seizes them, even in this life, as it hath seized me! If they succeed, woe, yea, a more lasting woe! There is another life, where no spells can charm the evil one, or allay the torture. I have come from a scene where blood flows in rivers; where Death stands by the side of the bravest and the highest, and the one monarch is the Guillotine; but all the mortal perils with which men can be beset, are nothing to the dreariness of a chamber where the Horror that passes death moves and stirs!"

It was then that Glyndon, with a cold and distinct precision, detailed, as he had done to Adela, the initiation through which he had gone. He described in words that froze the blood of

his listener, the appearance of that formless phantom, with the eyes that seared the brain and congealed the marrow of those who beheld. Once seen it never was to be exorcised. It came at its own will, prompting black thoughts, whispering strange temptations. Only in scenes of turbulent excitement was it absent! Solitude, serenity, the struggling desires after peace and virtue—*these* were the elements it loved to haunt! Bewildered, terror-stricken, the wild account confirmed by the dim impressions that never, in the depth and confidence of affection, had been closely examined, but rather banished as soon as felt; that the life and attributes of Zanoni were not like those of mortals—impressions which her own love had made her hitherto censure, as suspicions that wronged, and which, thus mitigated, had perhaps only served to rivet the fascinated chains in which he bound her heart and senses, but which now, as Glyndon's awful narrative filled her with contagious dread, half unbound the very spells they had woven before,—Viola started up in fear—not for *herself;* and clasped her child in her arms!

"Unhappiest one!" cried Glyndon, shuddering, "hast thou indeed given birth to a victim thou canst not save! Refuse it sustenance; let it look to thee in vain for food! In the grave, at least there are repose and peace!"

Then there came back to Viola's mind the remembrance of Zanoni's night-long watches by that cradle, and the fear which even then had crept over her as she heard his murmured, half-chanted words. And, as the child looked at her with its clear, steadfast eye, in the strange intelligence of that look there was something that only confirmed her awe. So there both Mother and Forewarner stood in silence, the sun smiling upon them through the casement, and dark, by the cradle, though they saw it not, sate the motionless veiled Thing!

But by degrees better, and juster, and more grateful memories of the past returned to the young mother. The features of the infant, as she gazed, took the aspect of the absent father. A voice seemed to break from those rosy lips, and say mournfully: "I speak to thee in thy child. In return for all my love for thee and thine, dost thou distrust me, at the first sentence of a maniac who accuses?"

Her breast heaved, her stature rose, her eyes shone with a serene and holy light.

"Go, poor victim of thine own delusions," she said to Glyndon; "I would not believe mine own senses, if they accused *its* father! And what knowest thou of Zanoni? What relation

have Mejnour and the grisly spectres he invoked, with the radiant image with which thou wouldst connect them!"

"Thou wilt learn too soon," replied Glyndon gloomily. "And the very phantom that haunts me whispers, with its bloodless lips, that its horrors await both thine and thee! I take not thy decision yet; before I leave Venice we shall meet again."

He said, and departed.

CHAPTER VI.

"Quel est l'égarement où ton âme se livre?"*
—LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, act. 4, sc. 4.

ALAS, Zanoni, the Aspirer, the dark bright one, didst thou think that the bond between the survivor of ages and the daughter of a day could endure? Didst thou not foresee that, until the ordeal was past, there could be no equality between thy wisdom and her love? Art thou absent now, seeking, amidst thy solemn secrets, the solemn safeguards for child and mother, and forgettest thou that the phantom that served thee hath power over its own gifts—over the lives it taught thee to rescue from the grave? Dost thou not know that Fear and Distrust, once sown in the heart of Love, spring up from the seed into a forest that excludes the stars? Dark bright one, the hateful eyes glare beside the mother and the child!

All that day Viola was distracted by a thousand thoughts and terrors, which fled as she examined them, to settle back the darklier. She remembered that, as she had once said to Glyndon, her very childhood had been haunted with strange forebodings that she was ordained for some preternatural doom. She remembered that, as she had told him this, sitting by the seas that slumbered in the arms of the Bay of Naples, he, too, had acknowledged the same forebodings, and a mysterious sympathy had appeared to unite their fates. She remembered, above all, that, comparing their entangled thoughts, both had, then, said that with the first sight of Zanoni the foreboding, the instinct, had spoken to their hearts more audibly than before, whispering that "with HIM was connected the secret of the unconjectured life."

And now, when Glyndon and Viola met again, the haunting fears of childhood, thus referred to, woke from their enchanted sleep. With Glyndon's terror she felt a sympathy, against which her reason and her love struggled in vain. And still, when she turned her looks upon her child, it watched her with

* To what delusion does thy soul abandon itself?

that steady, earnest eye, and its lips moved as if it sought to speak to her; but no sound came. The infant refused to sleep. Whenever she gazed upon its face, still those wakeful, watchful eyes! and in their earnestness, there spoke something of pain, of upbraiding, of accusation. They chilled her as she looked. Unable to endure, of herself, this sudden and complete revulsion of all the feelings which had hitherto made up her life, she formed the resolution natural to her land and creed; she sent for the priest who had habitually attended her at Venice, and to him she confessed, with passionate sobs and intense terror, the doubts that had broken upon her. The good father, a worthy and pious man, but with little education and less sense, one who held (as many of the lower Italians do to this day) even a poet to be a sort of sorcerer, seemed to shut the gates of hope upon her heart. His remonstrances were urgent, for his horror was unfeigned. He joined with Glyndon in imploring her to fly if she felt the smallest doubt that her husband's pursuits were of the nature which the Roman Church had benevolently burned so many scholars for adopting. And even the little that Viola could communicate seemed, to the ignorant ascetic, irrefragable proof of sorcery and witchcraft; he had, indeed, previously heard some of the strange rumors which followed the path of Zanoni, and was therefore prepared to believe the worst; the worthy Bartolomêo would have made no bones of sending Watt to the stake had he heard him speak of the steam-engine! But Viola, as untutored as himself, was terrified by his rough and vehement eloquence; terrified, for by that penetration which Catholic priests, however dull, generally acquire, in their vast experience of the human heart hourly exposed to their probe, Bartolomêo spoke less of danger to herself than to her child. "Sorcerers," said he, "have ever sought the most to decoy and seduce the souls of the young—nay, the infant"; and therewith he entered into a long catalogue of legendary fables, which he quoted as historical facts; all at which an English woman would have smiled, appalled the tender but superstitous Neapolitan; and when the priest left her, with solemn rebukes and grave accusations of a dereliction of her duties to her child, if she hesitated to fly with it from an abode polluted by the darker powers and unhallowed arts, Viola, still clinging to the image of Zanoni, sunk into a passive lethargy, which held her very reason in suspense.

The hours passed; night came on; the house was hushed; and Viola, slowly awakened from the numbness and torpor

which had usurped her faculties, tossed to and fro on her couch, restless and perturbed. The stillness became intolerable; yet more intolerable the sound that alone broke it, the voice of the clock, knelling moment after moment to its grave. The Moments, at last, seemed themselves to find voice, to gain shape. She thought she beheld them springing, wan and fairy-like, from the womb of darkness; and ere they fell again, extinguished, into that womb, their grave, their low, small voices murmured: "Woman, we report to eternity all that is done in time! What shall we report of thee, O guardian of a new-born soul?" She became sensible that her fancies had brought a sort of partial delirium, that she was in a state between sleep and waking, when suddenly one thought became more predominant than the rest. The chamber which, in that and every house they had inhabited, even that in the Greek isles, Zanoni had set apart to a solitude on which none might intrude, the threshold of which even Viola's step was forbid to cross, and never, hitherto, in that sweet repose of confidence which belongs to contented love, had she even felt the curious desire to disobey—now, that chamber drew her towards it. Perhaps, *there*, might be found a somewhat to solve the riddle, to dispel or confirm the doubt: that thought grew and deepened in its intenseness; it fastened on her as with a palpable and irresistible grasp: it seemed to raise her limbs without her will.

And now, through the chamber, along the galleries thou glidest, O lovely shape! Sleep-walking, yet awake. The moon shines on thee as thou glidest by casement after casement, white-robed and wandering spirit; thine arms crossed upon thy bosom, thine eyes fixed and open, with a calm unfearing awe. Mother, it is thy child that leads thee on. The fairy Moments go before thee. Thou hearest still the clock-knell tolling them to their graves behind. On, gliding on, thou hast gained the door; no lock bars thee, no magic spell drives thee back. Daughter of the dust, thou standest alone with Night in the chamber where, pale and numberless, the hosts of space have gathered round the seer!

CHAPTER VII.

"Des Erdenlebens
Schweres Traumbild sinkt, und sinkt, und sinkt."*
—*Das Ideal und das Lebens.*

She stood within the chamber, and gazed around her; no signs by which an Inquisitor of old could have detected

* The Dream-Shape of the heavy earthly life sinks, and sinks, and sinks.

the Scholar of the Black Art were visible. No crucibles and caldrons, no brass-bound volumes and ciphered girdles, no skulls and cross-bones. Quietly streamed the broad moonlight through the desolate chamber with its bare white walls. A few bunches of withered herbs, a few antique vessels of bronze, placed carelessly on a wooden form, were all which that curious gaze could identify with the pursuits of the absent owner. The magic, if it existed, dwelt in the artificer, and the materials, to other hands, were but herbs and bronze. So is it ever with thy works and wonders, O Genius, Seeker of the Stars! Words themselves are the common property of all men; yet, from words themselves, Thou, Architect of Immortalities, pilest up temples that shall outlive the Pyramids, and the very leaf of the Papyrus becomes a Shinar, stately with towers, round which the Deluge of Ages shall roar in vain!

But in that solitude has the Presence that there had invoked its wonders left no enchantment of its own! It seemed so; for as Viola stood in the chamber, she became sensible that some mysterious change was at work within herself. Her blood coursed rapidly, and with a sensation of delight, through her veins; she felt as if chains were falling from her limbs, as if cloud after cloud was rolling from her gaze. All the confused thoughts which had moved through her trance, settled and centered themselves in one intense desire to see the Absent One, to be with him. The monads that make up space and air seemed charged with a spiritual attraction; to become a medium through which her spirit could pass from its clay, and confer with the spirit to which the unutterable desire compelled it. A faintness seized her; she tottered to the seat on which the vessels and herbs were placed, and, as she bent down, she saw in one of the vessels a small vase of crystal. By a mechanical and involuntary impulse her hand seized the vase; she opened it, and the volatile essence it contained sparkled up, and spread through the room a powerful and delicious fragrance. She inhaled the odor, she laved her temples with the liquid, and suddenly her life seemed to spring up from the previous faintness: to spring, to soar, to float, to dilate, upon the wings of a bird.

The room vanished from her eyes. Away—away, over lands, and seas, and space, on the rushing desire flies the disprisoned mind!

Upon a stratum, not of this world, stood the world-born shapes of the sons of Science; upon an embryo world, upon a crude, wan, attenuated mass of matter, one of the Nebulæ,

which the suns of the myriad systems throw off as they roll round the Creator's throne,* to become themselves new worlds of symmetry and glory—planets and suns, that forever and forever shall in their turn multiply their shining race, and be the fathers of suns and planets yet to come.

There in that enormous solitude of an infant world, which thousands and thousands of years can alone ripen into form, the spirit of Viola beheld the shape of Zanoni, or rather the likeness, the simulacrum, the LEMUR of his shape, not its human and corporeal substance,—as if, like hers, the Intelligence was parted from the Clay; and as the sun, while it revolves and glows, had cast off into remotest space that Nebular image of itself, so the thing of earth, in the action of its more luminous and enduring being, had thrown its likeness into that newborn stranger of the heavens. There stood the phantom, a phantom of Mejnour by its side. In the gigantic chaos around raved and struggled the kindling elements—water and fire, darkness and light, at war—vapor and cloud hardening into mountains, and the Breath of Life moving like a steadfast splendor over all!

As the dreamer looked, and shivered, she beheld that even there the two phantoms of humanity were not alone. Dim monster-forms that that disordered chaos alone could engender, the first reptile colossal race that wreathe and crawl through the earliest stratum of a world laboring into life, coiled in the oozing matter or hovered through the meteorous vapors. But these the two seekers seemed not to heed; their gaze was fixed intent upon an object in the farthest space. With the eyes of the spirit, Viola followed theirs; with a terror far greater than the chaos and its hideous inhabitants produced, she beheld a shadowy likeness of the very room in which her form yet dwelt, its white walls, the moonshine sleeping on its floor, its open casement, with the quiet roofs and domes of Venice looming over the sea that sighed below; and in that room the ghost-like image of herself! This double phantom—

* "Astronomy instructs us, that in the original condition of the solar system, the sun was the nucleus of a nebulosity or luminous mass, which revolved on its axis, and extended far beyond the orbits of all the planets; the planets as yet having no existence. Its temperature gradually diminished, and becoming contracted by cooling, the rotation increased in rapidity, and zones of nebulosity were successively thrown off, in consequence of the centrifugal force overpowering the central attraction. The condensation of these separate masses constituted the planets and satellites. But this view of the conversion of gaseous matter into planetary bodies is not limited to our own system; it extends to the formation of the innumerable suns and worlds which are distributed throughout the universe. The sublime discoveries of modern astronomers have shown that every part of the realms of space abounds in large expansions of attenuated matter termed *nebulæ*, which are irregularly reflective of light, of various figures, and in different states of condensation, from that of a diffused luminous mass to suns and planets like our own."—From Mantell's eloquent and delightful work, entitled, "The Wonders of Geology," vol. i, p. 22.

here herself a phantom, gazing there upon a phantom-self—had in it a horror which no words can tell, no length of life forego.

But presently she saw this image of herself rise slowly, leave the room with its noiseless feet—it passes the corridor—it kneels by a cradle! Heaven of Heaven! she beholds her child?—still with its wondrous childlike beauty and its silent wakeful eyes. But beside that cradle there sits, cowering, a mantled, shadowy form, the more fearful and ghastly from its indistinct and unsubstantial gloom. The walls of that chamber seem to open as the scene of a theatre. A grim dungeon—streets through which pour shadowy clouds—wrath, and hatred, and the aspect of dæmons in their ghastly visages—a place of death—a murderous instrument—a shamble house of human flesh—herself—her child—all, all, rapid phantasmagoria, chased each other. Suddenly the phantom-Zanoni turned, it seemed to perceive herself—her second self. It sprang towards her; her spirit could bear no more. She shrieked, she woke! She found that in truth she had left that dismal chamber; the cradle was before her—the child! all—all as that trance had seen it, and, vanishing into air, even that dark, formless Thing!

"My child! my child! thy mother shall save thee yet!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"Qui? Toi! m'abandonner, où vas-tu? non! demeure,
Demeure!"*—LAHARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, act 3, sc. 5.

LETTER FROM VIOLA TO ZANONI.

"IT has come to this! I am the first to part! I, the unfaithful one, bid thee farewell forever. When thine eyes fall upon this writing, thou wilt know me as one of the dead. For thou that wert, and still art my life—I am lost to thee! O lover! O husband! O still worshipped and adored! If thou hast ever loved me, if thou canst still pity, seek not to discover the steps that fly thee. If thy charms can detect and track me, spare me—spare our child! Zanoni, I will rear it to love thee, to call thee father! Zanoni, its young lips shall pray for thee! Ah, spare thy child, for infants are the saints of earth, and their mediation may be heard on high! Shall I tell thee why I part? No; thou, the wisely terrible, canst divine what the hand trembles to record; and while I shudder at thy power; while it is thy power I fly (our child upon my bosom), it comforts me still to think that thy power can read

* Who? *Thou* abandon me? Where goest thou? No, stay, stay!

the heart! Thou knowest that it is the faithful mother that writes to thee, it is not the faithless wife! Is there sin in thy knowledge, Zanoni? Sin must have sorrow; and it were sweet, oh, how sweet, to be thy comforter. But the child, the infant, the soul that looks to mine for its shield! Magician, I wrest from thee that soul! Pardon, pardon, if my words wrong thee. See, I fall on my knees to write the rest!

"Why did I never recoil from thy mysterious lore? Why did the very strangeness of thine unearthly life only fascinate me with a delightful fear? Because, if thou wert sorcerer or angel-dæmon, there was no peril to other than myself: and none to me, for my love was my heavenliest part; and my ignorance in all things, except the art to love thee, repelled every thought that was not bright and glorious as thine image to my eyes. But NOW there is another! Look, why does it watch me thus? Why that never-sleeping, earnest, rebuking gaze? Have thy spells encompassed it already? Hast thou marked it, cruel one, for the terrors of thy unutterable art? Do not madden me—do not madden me! Unbind the spell!

"Hark! the oars without! They come—they come, to bear me from thee! I look round, and methinks that I see thee everywhere. Thou speakest to me from every shadow, from every star. There, by the casement, thy lips last pressed mine; there, there by that threshold didst thou turn again, and thy smile seemed so trustingly to confide in me! Zanoni! Husband! I will stay! I cannot part from thee! No, no! I will go to the room where thy dear voice, with its gentle music, assuaged the pangs of travail!—where, heard through the thrilling darkness, it first whispered to my ear 'Viola, thou art a mother!' A mother! Yes, I rise from my knees—I *am* a mother! They come! I am firm; farewell!"

Yes; thus suddenly, thus cruelly, whether in the delirium of blind and unreasoning superstition, or in the resolve of that conviction which springs from duty, the being for whom he had resigned so much of empire and of glory forsook Zanoni. This desertion, never foreseen, never anticipated, was yet but the constant fate that attends those who would place Mind *beyond* the earth, and yet treasure the Heart *within* it. Ignorance everlastingly shall recoil from knowledge. But never yet, from nobler and purer motives of self-sacrifice, did human love link itself to another, than did the forsaking wife now abandon the absent. For rightly had she said, that it was not the faithless wife, it *was* the faithful mother that fled from all in which her earthly happiness was centered.

As long as the passion and fervor that impelled the act animated her with false fever, she clasped her infant to her breast, and was consoled—resigned. But what bitter doubt of her own conduct, what icy pang of remorse shot through her heart, when, as they rested for a few hours on the road to Leghorn, she heard the woman who accompanied herself and Glyndon pray for safety to reach her husband's side, and strength to share the perils that would meet her there! Terrible contrast to her own desertion! She shrunk into the darkness of her own heart, and then no voice from within consoled her.

CHAPTER IX.

"Zukunft hast du mir gegeben,
Doch du nehmst den Augenblick." *
—*Kassandra.*

"MEJNOUR, behold thy work! Out, out, upon our little vanities of wisdom! Out, upon our ages of lore and life! To save her from Peril, I left her presence, and the Peril has seized her in its grasp!"

"Chide not thy wisdom, but thy passions! Abandon thine idle hope of the love of woman. See, for those who would unite the lofty with the lowly, the inevitable curse; thy very nature uncomprehended, thy sacrifices unguessed. The lowly one views but in the lofty a necromancer or a fiend. Titan, canst thou weep?"

"I know it now—I see it all! It *was* her spirit that stood beside our own, and escaped my airy clasp! O strong desire of motherhood and nature! unveiling all our secrets, piercing space, and traversing worlds! Mejnour, what awful learning lies hid in the ignorance of the heart that loves!"

"The heart," answered the Mystic coldly; "Ay, for five thousand years I have ransacked the mysteries of creation; but I have not yet discovered all the wonders in the heart of the simplest boor!"

"Yet our solemn rites deceived us not; the prophet-shadows, dark with terror and red with blood, still foretold that, even in the dungeon, and before the deathsman, I—*I* had the power to save them both!"

"But at some unconjectured and most fatal sacrifice to thyself."

"To myself! Icy sage, there is no self in love! I go.

* Futurity hast thou given to me—yet thou takest from me the Moment,

Nay, alone ; I want thee not. I want now no other guide but the human instincts of affection. No cave so dark, no solitude so vast, as to conceal her. Though mine art fail me ; though the stars heed me not ; though space, with its shining myriads, is again to me but the azure void, I return but to love, and youth, and hope ! When have they ever failed to triumph and to save ! "

BOOK VII.—THE REIGN OF TERROR.

" Orrida maestà nel fero aspetto
Terrore accresce, e più superbo il rende ;
Rosseggian gli occhi, e di veneno infetto
Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende.
Gli involve il mento, e sull 'irsuto petto
Ispida e folta la gran barbe scende ;
E in guisa di voragine profonda
S'apre la bocca d'atro sangue immonda." *

—*Ger. Lib.*, cant. iv. 7.

CHAPTER I.

" Qui suis-je, moi qu'on accuse ? Un esclave de la liberté, un martyr vivant de la République " †—*Discours de Robespierre*, 8 Thermidor.

It roars—the River of Hell, whose first outbreak was chaunted as the gush of a channel to Elysium. How burst into blossoming hopes fair hearts that had nourished themselves on the diamond dews of the rosy dawn, when Liberty came from the dark ocean, and the arms of decrepit Thraldom—Aurora from the bed of Tithon ! Hopes, ye have ripened into fruit, and the fruit is gore and ashes ! Beautiful Roland, eloquent Vergniaud, visionary Condorcet, high-hearted Malesherbes ! Wits, philosophers, statesmen, patriots, dreamers ! behold the millennium for which ye dared and labored !

I invoke the ghosts ! Saturn hath devoured his children,‡ and lives alone—in his true name of Moloch !

It is the Reign of Terror, with Robespierre the king. The struggles between the boa and the lion are past ; the boa has consumed the lion, and is heavy with the gorge ; Danton has fallen, and Camille Desmoulins. Danton had said before his

* A horrible majesty in the fierce aspect increases its terror, and renders it more superb. Red glow the eyes and the aspect infected, like a baleful comet, evenomed influences, glared around. A vast beard covers the chin—and, rough and thick, descends over the shaggy breast. And like a profound gulf expands the jaws, foul with black gore.

† Who am I, *I* whom they accuse ? A slave of Liberty, a living martyr for the Republic.

‡ La Révolution est comme Saturne, elle dévorera tous ses enfans.—Vergniaud.

death, "The poltroon Robespierre,—I alone could have saved him." From that hour, indeed, the blood of the dead giant clouded the craft of "Maximilien the Incorruptible," as at last, amidst the din of the roused Convention, it choked his voice.* If, after that last sacrifice, essential, perhaps, to his safety. Robespierre had proclaimed the close of the Reign of Terror, and acted upon the mercy which Danton had begun to preach, he might have lived and died a monarch. But the prisons continued to reek, the glaive to fall; and Robespierre perceived not that his mobs were glutted to satiety with death, and the strongest excitement a chief could give would be a return from devils into men.

We are transported to a room in the house of Citizen Dupleix, the *ménuisier*, in the month of July, 1794; or in the calendar of the Revolutionists it was the Thermidor of the Second Year of the Republic, One and Indivisible! Though the room was small, it was furnished and decorated with a minute and careful effort at elegance and refinement. It seemed, indeed, the desire of the owner to avoid at once what was mean and rude, and what was luxurious and voluptuous. It was a trim, orderly, precise grace that shaped the classic chairs, arranged the ample draperies, sunk the frameless mirrors into the wall, placed bust and bronze on their pedestals, and filled up the niches here and there with well-bound books, filed regularly in their appointed ranks. An observer would have said: "This man wishes to imply to you—I am not rich; I am not ostentatious; I am not luxurious; I am no indolent Sybarite, with couches of down, and pictures that provoke the sense; I am no haughty noble, with spacious halls, and galleries that awe the echo. But so much the greater is my merit if I disdain these excesses of the ease or the pride, since I love the elegant, and have a taste! Others may be simple and honest, from the very coarseness of their habits; if I, with so much refinement and delicacy, am simple and honest—reflect, and admire me!"

On the walls of this chamber hung many portraits; most of them represented but one face; on the formal pedestals were grouped many busts, most of them sculptured but one head. In that small chamber Egotism sat supreme, and made the Arts its looking-glasses. Erect in a chair, before a large table spread with letters, sat the original of bust and canvas, the owner of the apartment. He was alone, yet he sat erect, formal, stiff,

*Le sang de Danton t'étouffe!" (the blood of Danton chokes thee) said Garnier de l'Aube, when, on the fatal 9th of Thermidor, Robespierre gasped feebly forth—"Pour la dernière fois, Président des Assassins, je te demande la parole." (For the last time, President of Assassins, I demand to speak.)

precise, as if in his very home he was not at ease. His dress was in harmony with his posture and his chamber, it affected a neatness of its own, foreign both to the sumptuous fashions of the deposed nobles, and the filthy ruggedness of the *sans culottes*. Frizzled and *coiffé*, not a hair was out of order, not a speck lodged on the sleek surface of the blue coat, not a wrinkle crumpled the snowy vest, with its under relief of delicate pink. At the first glance, you might have seen in that face nothing but the ill-favored features of a sickly countenance. At a second glance you would have perceived that it had a power, a character of its own. The forehead, though low and compressed, was not without that appearance of thought and intelligence which, it may be observed, that breadth between the eyebrows almost invariably gives; the lips were firm and tightly drawn together, yet ever and anon they trembled, and writhed restlessly. The eyes, sullen and gloomy, were yet piercing, and full of a concentrated vigor, that did not seem supported by the thin, feeble frame, or the green lividness of the hues which told of anxiety and disease.

Such was Maximilien Robespierre; such the chamber over the *ménuisier's* shop, whence issued the edicts that launched armies on their career of glory, and ordained an artificial conduit to carry off the blood that deluged the metropolis of the most martial people in the globe! Such was the man who had resigned a judicial appointment (the early object of his ambition), rather than violate his philanthropical principles, by subscribing to the death of a single fellow-creature! Such was the virgin enemy to capital punishments, and such, Butcher-Dictator now, was the man whose pure and rigid manners, whose incorruptible honesty, whose hatred of the excesses that tempt to love and wine, would—had he died five years earlier—have left him the model for prudent fathers and careful citizens to place before their sons. Such was the man who seemed to have no vice, till circumstance, that hotbed, brought forth the two which, in ordinary times, lie ever the deepest and most latent in a man's heart—Cowardice and Envy. To one of these sources is to be traced every murder that master-fiend committed. His cowardice was of a peculiar and strange sort; for it was accompanied with the most unscrupulous and determined *will*—a will that Napoleon reverenced, a will of iron, and yet nerves of aspen. Mentally, he was a hero; physically, a dastard. When the veriest shadow of danger threatened his person, the frame cowered, but the will swept the danger to the slaughter-house. So there he sat, bolt upright, his small, lean

fingers clenched convulsively, his sullen eyes straining into space, their whites yellowed with streaks of corrupt blood, his ears literally moving to and fro like the ignobler animals', to catch every sound—a Dionysius in his cave—but his posture decorous and collected, and every formal hair in its frizzled place.

"Yes, yes," he said in a muttered tone, "I hear them; my good Jacobins are at their post on the stairs. Pity they swear so! I have a law against oaths; the manners of the poor and virtuous people must be reformed. When all is safe, an example or two amongst those good Jacobins would make effect. Faithful fellows, how they love me! Hum! What an oath was that! They need not swear so loud—upon the very staircase, too! It detracts from my reputation. Ha! steps!"

The soliloquist glanced at the opposite mirror, and took up a volume; he seemed absorbed in its contents, as a tall fellow, a bludgeon in his hand, a girdle, adorned with pistols, round his waist, opened the door, and announced two visitors. The one was a young man, said to resemble Robespierre in person; but of a far more decided and resolute expression of countenance. He entered first, and looking over the volume in Robespierre's hand, for the latter seemed still intent on his lecture, exclaimed:

"What! Rousseau's Heloïse? A love tale!"

"Dear Payan, it is not the love, it is the philosophy that charms me. What noble sentiments! What ardor of virtue! If Jean Jacques had but lived to see this day!"

While the Dictator thus commented on his favorite author, whom, in his orations, he labored hard to imitate, the second visitor was wheeled into the room in a chair. This man was also in what, to most, is the prime of life, viz., about thirty-eight; but he was literally dead in the lower limbs; Crippled, paralytic, distorted, he was yet, as the time soon came to tell him, a Hercules in Crime! But the sweetest of human smiles dwelt upon his lips, a beauty almost angelic characterized his features; * an inexpressible aspect of kindness, and the resignation of suffering but cheerful benignity, stole into the hearts of those who for the first time beheld him. With the most caressing, silver, flute-like voice, Citizen Couthon saluted the admirer of Jean Jacques.

* "Figure d'ange," says one of his contemporaries, in describing Couthon. The address, drawn up most probably by Payan (Thermidor 9), after the arrest of Robespierre, thus mentions his crippled colleague: "Couthon, ce citoyen vertueux, *qui n'a que le cœur et la tête de vivans*, mais qui les a brûlants de patriotisme." *

* Couthon, that virtuous citizen, who has but the head and heart of the living, yet possesses these all on flame with patriotism.

"Nay, do not say that it is not the *love* that attracts thee; it *is* the love! But not the gross, sensual attachment of man for woman. No! the sublime affection for the whole human race, and, indeed, for all that lives!"

And Citizen Couthon, bending down, fondled the little spaniel that he invariably carried in his bosom, even to the Convention, as a vent for the exuberant sensibilities which overflowed his affectionate heart.*

"Yes, for all that lives," repeated Robespierre tenderly. "Good Couthon—poor Couthon! Ah, the malice of men! How we are misrepresented! To be calumniated as the executioners of our colleagues! Ah, it is *that* which pierces the heart! To be an object of terror to the enemies of our country, *that* is noble; but to be an object of terror to the good, the patriotic, to those one loves and reveres, *that* is the most terrible of human tortures; at least to a susceptible and honest heart!" †

"How I love to hear him!" ejaculated Couthon.

"Hem!" said Payan, with some impatience. "But now to business!"

"Ah, to business!" said Robespierre, with a sinister glance from his bloodshot eyes.

"The time has come," said Payan, "when the safety of the Republic demands a complete concentration of its power. These brawlers of the *Comité du Salut Public* can only destroy; they cannot construct. They hated you, Maximilien, from the moment you attempted to replace anarchy by institutions. How they mock at the festival which proclaimed the acknowledgement of a Supreme Being: they would have no ruler, even in heaven! Your clear and vigorous intellect saw that, having wrecked an old world, it became necessary to shape a new one. The first step towards construction must be to destroy the destroyers. While we deliberate, your enemies act. Better this very night to attack the handful of gens d'armes that guard them, than confront the battalions they may raise to-morrow."

"No," said Robespierre, who recoiled before the determined

* This tenderness for some pet animal was by no means peculiar to Couthon; it seems rather a common fashion with the gentle butchers of the Revolution. M. George Duval informs us ("Souvenirs de la Terreur," vol. iii. p. 183) that Chaumette had an aviary, to which he devoted his harmless leisure; the murderous Fournier carried, on his shoulders a pretty little squirrel, attached by a silver chain; Panis bestowed the superfluity of his affections upon two gold pheasants; and Marat, who would not abate one of the three hundred thousand heads he demanded, *reared doves!* Apropos of the spaniel of Couthon, Duval gives us an amusing anecdote of Sergent, not one of the least relentless agents of the massacre of September. A lady came to implore his protection for one of her relations confined in the Abbaye. He scarcely deigned to speak to her. As she retired in despair, she trod by accident on the paw of his favorite spaniel. Sergent, turning round, enraged and furious, exclaimed: "*Madam, have you no humanity!*"

† Not to fatigue the reader with annotations, I may here observe that nearly every sentiment ascribed in the text to Robespierre is to be found expressed in his various discourses.

spirit of Payan; I have a better and safer plan. This is the 6th of Thermidor; on the 10th—on the 10th, the Convention go in a body to the *Fête Décadaire*. A mob shall form; the *canonniers*, the troops of Henriot, the young pupils de *l'Ecole de Mars*, shall mix in the crowd. Easy, then, to strike the conspirators whom we shall designate to our agents. On the same day, too, Fouquier and Dumas shall not rest; and a sufficient number of '*the suspect*' to maintain salutary awe, and keep up the revolutionary excitement, shall perish by the *glaive* of the law. The 10th shall be the great day of action. Payan, of these last culprits, have you prepared a list?"

"It is here," returned Payan laconically, presenting a paper.

Robespierre glanced over it rapidly. "Collot d'Herbois!—good! Barrère!—ay, it was Barrère who said, 'Let us strike; the dead alone never return.'* Vadier, the savage jester!—good—good! Vadier of the Mountain. He has called me '*Mahomet*'! *Scélérat!* Blasphemer!"

"Mahomet is coming to the Mountain," said Couthon with his silvery accent, as he caressed his spaniel.

"But how is this? I do not see the name of Tallien! Tallien—I hate that man; that is," said Robespierre, correcting himself with the hypocrisy or self-deceit which those who formed the council of this phrasemonger exhibited habitually, even among themselves—"that is, Virtue and our Country hate him! There is no man in the whole Convention who inspires me with the same horror as Tallien. Couthon, I see a thousand Dantons where Tallien sits!"

"Tallien has the only head that belongs to this deformed body," said Payan, whose ferocity and crime, like those of St. Just, were not unaccompanied by talents of no common order. "Were it not better to draw away the head, to win, to buy him, for the time, and dispose of him better when left alone? He may hate *you*, but he loves *money*."

"No," said Robespierre, writing down the name of Jean-Lambert Tallien, with a slow hand, that shaped each letter with stern distinctness; "that one head *is my necessity!*"

"I have a *small* list here," said Couthon sweetly; "a *very* small list. You are dealing with the Mountain; it is necessary to make a few examples in the Plain. These moderates are as straws which follow the wind. They turned against us yesterday in the Convention. A little terror will correct the weathercocks. Poor creatures! I owe them no ill-will; I could weep for them. But before all, *la chère patrie!*"

* Frappons! il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas."—BARRÈRE.

The terrible glance of Robespierre devoured the list which the man of sensibility submitted to him. "Ah, these are well chosen; men not of mark enough to be regretted, which is the best policy with the relics of that party; some, foreigners too; yes, *they* have no parents in Paris. These wives and parents are beginning to plead against us. Their complaints demoralize the guillotine!"

"Couthon is right," said Payan; "*my* list contains those whom it will be safer to despatch *en masse* in the crowd assembled at the Fête. *His* list selects those whom we may prudently consign to the law. Shall it not be signed at once?"

"It *is* signed," said Robespierre, formally replacing his pen upon the inkstand. "Now to more important matters. These deaths will create no excitement; but Collot d'Herbois, Bourdon de l'Oise, Tallien"—the last name Robespierre gasped as he pronounced—"*they* are the heads of parties. This is life or death to us as well as them."

"Their heads are the footstools to your curule chair," said Payan, in a half-whisper. "There is no danger if we are bold. Judges, juries, all have been your selection. You seize with one hand the army, with the other, the law. Your voice yet commands the people—"

"The poor and virtuous people," murmured Robespierre.

"And even," continued Payan, "if our design at the Fête fail us, we must not shrink from the resources still at our command. Reflect! Henriot, the general of the Parisian army, furnishes you with troops to arrest; the Jacobin club with the public to approve; inexorable Dumas with judges who never acquit. We must be bold!"

"And we *are* bold," exclaimed Robespierre, with sudden passion, and striking his hand on the table as he rose, with his crest erect, as a serpent in the act to strike. "In seeing the multitude of vices that the revolutionary torrent mingles with civic virtues, I tremble to be sullied in the eyes of posterity by the impure neighborhood of these perverse men, who thrust themselves among the sincere defenders of humanity. What! they think to divide the country like a booty! I thank them for their hatred to all that is virtuous and worthy! These men," and he grasped the list of Payan in his hand, "these! not *we*—have drawn the line of demarcation between themselves and the lovers of France!"

"True, we must reign alone!" muttered Payan; "in other words, the State needs unity of will"; working, with his strong

practical mind, the corollary from the logic of his word-compelling colleague!

"I will go to the Convèntion," continued Robespierre. "I have absented myself too long, lest I might seem to overawe the Republic that I have created. Away with such scruples! I will prepare the people! I will blast the traitors with a look!"

He spoke with the terrible firmness of the orator that had never failed; of the moral will that marched like a warrior on the cannon. At that instant he was interrupted; a letter was brought to him; he opened it; his face fell; he shook from limb to limb; it was one of the anonymous warnings by which the hate and revenge of those yet left alive to threaten tortured the death-giver.

"Thou art smeared," ran the lines, "with the best blood of France. Read thy sentence! I await the hour when the people shall knell thee to the doomsman. If my hope deceive me, if deferred too long, hearken—read! This hand, which thine eyes shall search in vain to discover, shall pierce thy heart. I see thee every day—I am with thee every day. At each hour my arm rises against thy breast. Wretch! live yet awhile, though but for few and miserable days—live to think of me—sleep to dream of me! Thy terror, and thy thought of me, are the heralds of thy doom. Adieu! this day itself, I go forth to riot on thy fears!"*

"Your lists are not full enough!" said the tyrant, with a hollow voice, as the paper dropped from his trembling hand. "Give them to me! give them to me! Think again!—think again! Barrère is right—right! "Frappons! il n'y a que les morts que ne revient pas!"

CHAPTER II.

"La haine dans ces lieux n'a qu'un glaive assassin.
Elle marche dans l'ombre." †
—LA HARPE, *Jeanne de Naples*, Act iv. sc. 1.

WHILE such the designs and fears of Maximilien Robespierre, common danger, common hatred, whatever was yet left of mercy or of virtue, in the agents of the Revolution, served to unite strange opposites in hostility to the universal death-dealer. There was, indeed, an actual conspiracy at work

* See *Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre*, etc.—vol. ii. p. 155. (No. lx.)

† Hate, in these regions, has but the sword of the assassin. She moves in the shade.

against him among men little less bespattered than himself with innocent blood. But that conspiracy would have been idle of itself, despite the abilities of Tallien and Barras (the only men whom it comprised, worthy, by foresight and energy, the names of "leaders"). The sure and destroying elements that gathered round the tyrant were Time and Nature; the one, which he no longer suited; the other, which he had outraged and stirred up in the human breast. The most atrocious party of the Revolution, the followers of Hébert, gone to his last account, the butcher-atheists, who, in desecrating heaven and earth, still arrogated inviolable sanctity to themselves, were equally enraged at the execution of their filthy chief, and the proclamation of a Supreme Being. The populace, brutal as it had been, started as from a dream of blood, when their huge idol, Danton, no longer filled the stage of terror, rendering crime popular by that combination of careless frankness and eloquent energy which endears their heroes to the herd. The *glaive* of the guillotine had turned against *themselves*. They had yelled and shouted, and sung and danced, when the venerable age, or the gallant youth, of aristocracy or letters, passed by their streets in the dismal tumbrils; but they shut up their shops, and murmured to each other, when their own order was invaded, and tailors and cobblers, and journeymen and laborers, were huddled off to the embraces of the "Holy Mother Guillotine," with as little ceremony as if they had been the Montmorencies or the La Trémouilles, the Malesherbes or the Lavoisiers. "At this time," said Couthon justly, "*Les ombres de Danton, d'Hébert, de Chaumette, se promènent parmi nous!*" *

Among those who had shared the doctrines, and who now dreaded the fate, of the atheist Hébert was the painter, Jean Nicot. Mortified and enraged to find that, by the death of his patron, his career was closed; and that, in the zenith of the Revolution for which he had labored, he was lurking in caves and cellars, more poor, more obscure, more despicable than he had been at the commencement; not daring to exercise even his art, and fearful every hour that his name would swell the lists of the condemned,—he was naturally one of the bitterest enemies of Robespierre and his government. He held secret meetings with Collot d'Herbois, who was animated by the same spirit; and with the creeping and furtive craft that characterized his abilities, he contrived, undetected, to disseminate tracts and invectives against the Dictator, and to prepare, amidst "the poor and virtuous people," the train for the grand explo-

* The shades of Danton, Hébert, and Chaumette, walk amongst us.

sion. But still so firm to the eyes, even of profounder politicians than Jean Nicot, appeared the sullen power of the incorruptible Maximilien; so timorous was the movement against him, that Nicot, in common with many others, placed his hopes rather in the dagger of the assassin, than the revolt of the multitude. But Nicot, though not actually a coward, shrunk himself from braving the fate of the martyr; he had sense enough to see that though all parties might rejoice in the assassination, all parties would probably concur in beheading the assassin. He had not the virtue to become a Brutus. His object was to inspire a proxy-Brutus; and in the centre of that inflammable population, this was no improbable hope.

Amongst those loudest and sternest against the reign of blood; amongst those most disenchanted of the Revolution; amongst those most appalled by its excesses, was, as might be expected, the Englishman, Clarence Glyndon. The wit and accomplishments, the uncertain virtues that had lighted with fitful gleams the mind of Camille Desmoulins had fascinated Glyndon more than the qualities of any other agent in the Revolution. And when (for Camille Desmoulins had a heart, which seemed dead or dormant in most of his contemporaries) that vivid child of genius and of error, shocked at the massacre of the Girondins, and repentant of his own efforts against them, began to rouse the serpent malice of Robespierre by new doctrines of mercy and toleration, Glyndon espoused his views with his whole strength and soul. Camille Desmoulins perished, and Glyndon, hopeless at once of his own life and the cause of humanity, from that time, sought only the occasion of flight from the devouring Golgotha. He had two lives to heed besides his own; for them he trembled, and for them he schemed and plotted the means of escape. Though Glyndon hated the principles, the party,* and the vices of Nicot, he yet extended to the painter's penury the means of subsistence; and Jean Nicot in return, designed to exalt Glyndon to that very immortality of a Brutus, from which he modestly recoiled himself. He founded his designs on the physical courage, on the wild and unsettled fancies of the English artist; and on the vehement hate, and indignant loathing, with which he openly regarded the government of Maximilien.

At the same hour on the same day in July in which Robespierre conferred (as we have seen) with his allies, two persons

* None were more opposed to the Hébertists than Camille Desmoulins and his friends. It is curious and amusing to see these leaders of the mob, calling the mob "the people," one day, and the "*canaille*" the next, according as it suits them. "I know," says Camille, "that they, the Hébertists, have all the *canaille* with them." (Ils ont toute la canaille pour eux.)

were seated in a small room, in one of the streets leading out of the Rue St. Honoré: the one, a man, appeared listening patiently, and with a sullen brow, to his companion, a woman of singular beauty, but with a bold and reckless expression, and her face as she spoke was animated by the passions of a half savage and vehement nature.

"Englishman," said the woman, "beware! You know that, whether in flight or at the place of death, I would brave all to be by your side—you know *that!* Speak!"

"Well, Fillide; did I ever doubt your fidelity?"

"Doubt it you cannot, betray it you may. You tell me that in flight you must have a companion besides myself, and that companion is a female. It shall not be!"

"Shall not!"

"It shall not!" repeated Fillide firmly, and folding her arms across her breast; before Glyndon could reply, a slight knock at the door was heard, and Nicot opened the latch and entered.

Fillide sunk into her chair, and leaning her face on her hands, appeared unheeding of the intruder, and the conversation that ensued.

"I cannot bid thee good-day, Glyndon," said Nicot, as in his *sans-culotte* fashion he strode towards the artist, his ragged hat on his head, his hands in his pockets, and the beard of a week's growth upon his chin; "I cannot bid thee good-day, for while the tyrant lives, evil is every sun that sheds its beams on France."

"It is true; what then? We have sowed the wind, we must reap the whirlwind."

"And yet," said Nicot, apparently not hearing the reply, and as if musingly to himself, "it is strange to think that the butcher is as mortal as the butchered; that his life hangs on as slight a thread; that between the cuticle and the heart there is as short a passage; that, in short, one blow can free France, and redeem mankind."

Glyndon surveyed the speaker with a careless and haughty scorn, and made no answer.

"And," proceeded Nicot, "I have sometimes looked around for the man born for this destiny, and whenever I have done so, my steps have led me hither!"

"Should they not rather have led thee to the side of Maximilien Robespierre?" said Glyndon, with a sneer.

"No," returned Nicot coldly; "No; for I am a '*suspect*'—I could not mix with his train; I could not approach within a

hundred yards of his person, but I should be seized ; *you*, as yet, are safe. Hear me ! " and his voice became earnest and expressive ; " Hear me ! There seems danger in this action ; there is none. I have been with Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes ; they will hold him harmless who strikes the blow ; the populace would run to thy support ; the Convention would hail thee as their deliverer—the—"

" Hold, man ! How darest thou couple my name with the act of an assassin ? Let the tocsin sound from yonder tower, to a war between Humanity and the Tyrant, and I will not be the last in the field ; but liberty never yet acknowledged a defender in a felon."

There was something so brave and noble in Glyndon's voice, mien, and manner, as he thus spoke, that Nicot at once was silenced ; at once he saw that he had misjudged the man.

" No," said Fillide, lifting her face from her hands ; " No ! Your friend has a wiser scheme in preparation : he would leave you wolves to mangle each other. He is right ; but—"

" Flight ! " exclaimed Nicot ; " Is it possible ? Flight ! How ? When ? By what means ? All France begirt with spies and guards ! Flight ! Would to Heaven it were in our power ! "

" Dost thou, too, desire to escape the blessed Revolution ? "

" Desire ! Oh ! " cried Nicot suddenly, and, falling down, he clasped Glyndon's knees ; " Oh ! spare me with thyself ! My life is a torture ; every moment the guillotine frowns before me. I know that my hours are numbered ; I know that the tyrant waits but his time to write my name in his inexorable list ; I know that Réné Dumas, the judge who never pardons, has, from the first, resolved upon my death. Oh, Glyndon, by our old friendship, by our common art, by thy loyal English faith, and good English heart, let me share thy flight ! "

" If thou wilt, so be it."

" Thanks ! My whole life shall thank thee. But how hast thou prepared the means—the passports, the disguise, the—"

" I will tell thee. Thou knowest C——, of the Convention ; he has power, and he is covetous. '*Qu'on me meprise pourvu que je dine*,' * said he, when reproached for his avarice."

" Well ? "

" By the help of this sturdy republican, who has friends enough in the *Comité*, I have obtained the means necessary for flight ; I have purchased them. For a consideration, I can procure thy passport also."

* Let them despise me, provided that I dine.

"Thy riches, then, are not in *assignats?*"

"No, I have gold enough for us all."

And here Glyndon, beckoning Nicot into the next room, first briefly and rapidly detailed to him the plan proposed, and the disguises to be assumed conformably to the passports, and then added: "In return for the service I render thee, grant me one favor, which I think is in thy power. Thou rememberest Viola Pisani?"

"Ah—remember! Yes! And the lover with whom she fled."

"And *from* whom she is a fugitive now."

"Indeed—what! I understand. *Sacré blue!* but you are a lucky fellow, *cher confrère.*"

"Silence, man! With thy eternal prate of brotherhood and virtue, thou seemest never to believe in one kindly action, or one virtuous thought!"

Nicot bit his lip, and replied sullenly, "Experience is a great undeceiver. Humph! What service can I do thee, with regard to the Italian?"

"I have been accessory to her arrival in this city of snares and pitfalls. I cannot leave her alone amidst dangers from which neither innocence nor obscurity is a safeguard. In your blessed Republic, a good and unsuspected citizen, who casts a desire on any woman, maid, or wife, has but to say: 'Be mine or I denounce you!' In a word, Viola must share our flight."

"What so easy? I see your passports provide for her."

"What so easy! What so difficult? This Fillide—would that I had never seen her! Would that I had never enslaved my soul to my senses! The love of an uneducated, violent, unprincipled woman opens with a heaven, to merge in a hell! She is jealous as all the Furies, she will not hear of a female companion; and when once she see the beauty of Viola! I tremble to think of it. She is capable of any excess in the storm of her passions."

"Aha, I know what such women are! My wife, Beatrice Sacchini, whom I took from Naples, when I failed with this very Viola, divorced me when my money failed, and as the mistress of a Judge, passes me in her carriage while I crawl through the streets. Plague on her! But patience, patience! such is the lot of virtue. Would I were Robespierre for a day!"

"Cease these tirades!" exclaimed Glyndon impatiently; "and to the point. What would you advise?"

"Leave your Fillide behind."

'Leave her to her own ignorance; leave her unprotected even by the mind; leave her in the Saturnalia of Rape and Murder? No! I have sinned against her once. But come what may, I will not so basely desert one who, with all her errors, trusted her faith to my love."

"You deserted her at Marseilles."

"True; but I left her in safety, and I did not then believe her love to be so deep and faithful. I left her gold, and I imagined she would be easily consoled; but, since then, *we have known danger together!* And now to leave her alone to that danger which she would never have incurred but for devotion to me! No, that is impossible! A project occurs to me. Canst thou not say that thou hast a sister, a relative, or a benefactress, whom thou wouldst save? Can we not, till we have left France, make Fillide believe that Viola is one in whom *thou* only art interested; and whom, for thy sake only, I permit to share in our escape?"

"Ha, well thought of! Certainly!"

"I will then appear to yield to Fillide's wishes, and resign the project, which she so resents, of saving the innocent object of her frantic jealousy. You, meanwhile, shall yourself entreat Fillide to intercede with me, to extend the means of escape to—"

"To a lady (she knows I have no sister) who has aided me in my distress. Yes, I will manage all, never fear. One word more—what has become of that Zanoni?"

"Talk not of him—I know not."

"Does he love this girl still?"

"It would seem so. She is his wife, the mother of his infant, who is with her."

"Wife! Mother! He loves her! Aha! And why—"

"No questions now. I will go and prepare Viola for the flight; you, meanwhile, return to Fillide."

"But the address of the Neapolitan? It is necessary I should know, lest Fillide inquire."

"Rue M—— T——, No 27. Adieu."

Glyndon seized his hat, and hastened from the house.

Nicot, left alone, seemed for a few moments buried in thought. "Oho," he muttered to himself, "can I not turn all this to my account? Can I not avenge myself on thee, Zanoni, as I have so often sworn, through thy wife and child? Can I not possess myself of thy gold, thy passports, and thy Fillide, hot Englishman, who wouldst humble me with thy loathed benefits, and who has chucked me thine alms as to a beggar? And Fillide,

I love her; and thy gold, I love *that* more! Puppets, I move your strings!"

He passed slowly into the chamber where Fillide yet sat, with gloomy thought on her brow and tears standing in her dark eyes. She looked up eagerly as the door opened, and turned from the rugged face of Nicot with an impatient movement of disappointment.

"Glyndon," said the painter, drawing a chair to Fillide's, "has left me to enliven your solitude, fair Italian. He is not jealous of the ugly Nicot; ha! ha!—yet Nicot loved thee well once, when his fortunes were more fair. But enough of such past follies."

"Your friend, then, has left the house. Whither? Ah! you look away—you falter—you cannot meet my eyes! Speak! I implore, I command thee, speak!"

"*Enfant!* and what dost thou fear?"

"*Fear!* Yes, alas, I fear!" said the Italian; and her whole frame seemed to shrink into itself as she fell once more back into her seat.

Then, after a pause, she tossed the long hair from her eyes, and, starting up abruptly, paced the room with disordered strides. At length she stopped opposite to Nicot, laid her hand on his arm, drew him toward an escritoire, which she unlocked, and opening a well, pointed to the gold that lay within, and said: "Thou art poor, thou lovest money; take what thou wilt, but undeceive me. Who is this woman whom thy friend visits? And does he love her?"

Nicot's eyes sparkled, and his hands opened and clenched, and clenched and opened, as he gazed upon the coins. But reluctantly resisting the impulse, he said with an affected bitterness: "Thinkest thou to bribe me? If so, it cannot be with gold. But what if he does love a rival? What if he betrays thee? What if, wearied by thy jealousies, he designs in his flight to leave thee behind? Would such knowledge make thee happier?"

"Yes!" exclaimed the Italian fiercely; "Yes, for it would be happiness to hate and to be avenged! Oh, thou knowest not how sweet is hatred to those who have really loved."

"But wilt thou swear, if I reveal to thee the secret, that thou wilt not betray me; that thou wilt not fall, as women do, into weak tears and fond reproaches when thy betrayer returns?"

"Tears—reproaches! Revenge hides itself in smiles!"

"Thou art a brave creature!" said Nicot, almost admiringly. "One condition more: thy lover designs to fly with his new

love, to leave thee to thy fate; if I prove this to thee, and if I give thee revenge against thy rival, wilt thou fly with me? I love thee! I will wed thee!"

Fillide's eyes flashed fire; she looked at him with unutterable disdain, and was silent.

Nicot felt he had gone too far; and with that knowledge of the evil part of our nature, which his own heart and association with crime had taught him, he resolved to trust the rest to the passions of the Italian, when raised to the height to which he was prepared to lead them.

"Pardon me," he said: "my love made me too presumptuous; and yet it is only that love, my sympathy for thee, beautiful and betrayed, that can induce me to wrong, with my revelations, one whom I have regarded as a brother. I can depend upon thine oath to conceal all from Glyndon?"

"On my oath, and my wrongs, and my mountain blood!"

"Enough! Get thy hat and mantle, and follow me!"

As Fillide left the room, Nicot's eyes again rested on the gold; it was much—much more than he had dared to hope for; and as he peered into the well, and opened the drawers, he perceived a packet of letters in the well-known hand of Camille Desmoulins. He seized, he opened the packet; his looks brightened as he glanced over a few sentences. "This would give fifty Glyndons to the guillotine!" he muttered, and thrust the packet into his bosom.

O Artist! O haunted one! O erring Genius! Behold the two worst foes—the False Ideal that knows no God, and the False Love that burns from the corruption of the senses, and takes no lustre from the soul!

CHAPTER III.

"Liebe sonnt das Reich der Nacht."*
—Der Triumph der Liebe.

LETTER FROM ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

Paris.

Dost thou remember in the old time, when the Beautiful yet dwelt in Greece, how we two, in the vast Athenian Theatre, witnessed the birth of Words as undying as ourselves? Dost thou remember the thrill of terror that ran through that mighty audience, when the wild Cassandra burst from her awful silence to shriek to her relentless god! How ghastly,

* Love illumes the realms of Night.

at the entrance of the House of Atreus, about to become her tomb, rang out her exclamations of foreboding woe: "Dwelling abhorred of Heaven! Human shamble-house, and floor blood-bespattered!" * Dost thou remember how, amidst the breathless awe of those assembled thousands, I drew close to thee, and whispered: "Verily, no prophet like the Poet! This scene of fabled horror comes to me as a dream, shadowing forth some likeness in my own remoter future!" As I enter this slaughter-house, that scene returns to me, and I hearken to the voice of Cassandra ringing in my ears. A solemn and warning dread gathers round me, as if I too were come to find a grave, and "the Net of Hades" had already entangled me in its web! What dark treasure-houses of vicissitude and woe are our memories become! What our lives, but the chronicles of unrelenting Death! It seems to me as yesterday when I stood in the streets of this city of the Gaul, as they shone with plumed chivalry, and the air rustled with silken braveries. Young Louis, the monarch and the lover, was victor of the Tournament at the Carousel; and all France felt herself splendid in the splendor of her gorgeous chief! Now there is neither throne nor altar; and what is in their stead? I see it yonder—THE GUILLOTINE! It is dismal to stand amidst the ruins of mouldering cities, to startle the serpent and the lizard amidst the wrecks of Persepolis and Thebes; but more dismal still to stand as I—the stranger from Empires that have ceased to be—stand now amidst the yet ghastlier ruins of Law and Order, the shattering of mankind themselves! Yet here, even here, Love, the Beautifier, that hath led my steps, can walk with unshrinking hope through the wilderness of Death! Strange is the passion that makes a world in itself, that individualizes the One amidst the Multitude; that, through all the changes of my solemn life, yet survives, though ambition, and hate, and anger are dead; the one solitary angel, hovering over an universe of tombs on its two tremulous and human wings—Hope and Fear!

How is it, Mejnour, that, as my diviner art abandoned me; as, in my search for Viola, I was aided but by the ordinary instincts of the merest mortal—how is it that I have never desponded, that I have felt in every difficulty the prevailing prescience that we should meet at last? So cruelly was every vestige of her flight concealed from me; so suddenly, so secretly had she fled, that all the spies, all the Authorities of Venice, could give me no clue. All Italy I searched in

* ÆSCH., *Agam.*, 1098.

vain! Her young home at Naples!—how still, in its humble chambers, there seemed to linger the fragrance of her presence! All the sublimest secrets of our lore failed me; failed to bring her soul visible to mine; yet morning and night, thou lone and childless one, morning and night, detached from myself, I can commune with my child! There in that most blessed, typical, and mysterious of all relations, Nature herself appears to supply what Science would refuse. Space cannot separate the Father's watchful soul from the cradle of his first-born! I know not of its resting-place and home—my visions picture not the land—only the small and tender life to which all space is as yet the heritage! For to the infant, before reason dawns, before man's bad passions can dim the essence that it takes from the element it hath left, there is no peculiar country, no native city, and no mortal language. Its soul as yet is the denizen of all airs and of every world; and in space its soul meets with mine, the Child communes with the Father! Cruel and forsaking one, thou for whom I left the wisdom of the spheres, thou, whose fatal dower has been the weakness and terrors of humanity, couldst thou think that young soul less safe on earth because I would lead it evermore up to heaven! Didst thou think that I could have wronged mine own? Didst thou not know that in its serenest eyes the life that I gave it spoke to warn, to upbraid the mother who would bind it to the darkness and pangs of the prison-house of clay? Didst thou not feel that it was I who, permitted by the Heavens, shielded it from suffering and disease? And in its wondrous beauty, I blessed the holy medium through which, at last, my spirit might confer with thine!

And how have I tracked them hither? I learned that thy pupil had been at Venice. I could not trace the young and gentle Neophyte of Parthenope in the description of the haggard and savage visitor who had come to Viola before she fled; but when I would have summoned his IDEA before me, it refused to obey; and I knew then that his fate had become entwined with Viola's. I have tracked him, then, to this Lazar House; I arrived but yesterday; I have not yet discovered him.

* * * * * * *

I have just returned from their courts of justice—dens where tigers arraign their prey. I find not whom I would seek. They are saved as yet; but I recognize in the crimes of mortals the dark wisdom of the Everlasting. Mejnour, I see here, for the first time, how majestic and beauteous a thing is Death!

Of what sublime virtues we robbed ourselves, when, in the thirst for virtue, we attained the art by which we can refuse to die! When, in some happy clime, where to breathe is to enjoy, the charnel-house swallows up the young and fair; when, in the noble pursuit of knowledge, Death comes to the student, and shuts out the enchanted land, which was opening to his gaze, how natural for us to desire to live; how natural to make perpetual life the first object of research! But here, from my tower of time, looking over the darksome past, and into the starry future, I learn how great hearts feel what sweetness and glory there is to die for the things they love! I saw a father sacrificing himself for his son; he was subjected to charges which a word of his could dispel—he was mistaken for his boy. With what joy he seized the error, confessed the noble crimes of valor and fidelity which the son had indeed committed, and went to the doom, exulting that his death saved the life he had given, not in vain! I saw women, young, delicate, in the bloom of their beauty; they had vowed themselves to the cloister. Hands smeared with the blood of saints opened the grate that had shut them from the world, and bade them go forth, forget their vows, forswear the Divine One these dæmons would depose, find lovers and helpmates, and be free. And some of these young hearts had loved, and even, though in struggles, loved yet. Did they forswear the vow? Did they abandon the faith? Did even love allure them? Mejnour, with one voice they preferred to die! And whence comes this courage? Because such *hearts live in some more abstract and holier life than their own. But to live forever upon this earth, is to live in nothing diviner than ourselves.* Yes, even amidst this gory butcherdom, God, the Ever-living, vindicates to man the sanctity of His servant, Death!

* * * * * * *

Again I have seen thee in spirit; I have seen and blessed thee, my sweet child! Dost thou not know me also in thy dreams? Dost thou not feel the beating of my heart through the veil of thy rosy slumbers? Dost thou not hear the wings of the brighter beings that I yet can conjure around thee, to watch, to nourish, and to save? And when the spell fades at thy waking, when thine eyes open to the day, will they not look round for me, and ask thy mother, with their mute eloquence, "why she has robbed thee of a father"?

Woman, dost thou not repent thee? Flying from imaginary fears, hast thou not come to the very lair of terror, where Danger sits visible and incarnate? Oh, if we could but meet,

wouldst thou not fall upon the bosom thou hast so wronged, and feel, poor wanderer amidst the storms, as if thou hadst regained the shelter? Mejnour, still my researches fail me. I mingle with all men, even their judges and their spies, but I cannot yet gain the clue. I know that she is here. I know it by an instinct; the breath of my child seems warmer and more familiar.

They peer at me with venomous looks, as I pass through their streets. With a glance I disarm their malice, and fascinate the basilisks. Everywhere I see the track and scent the presence of the Ghostly One that dwells on the Threshold, and whose victims are the souls that would *aspire*, and can only *fear*. I see its dim shapelessness going before the men of blood, and marshalling their way. Robespierre passed me with his furtive step. Those eyes of horror were gnawing into his heart. I looked down upon their Senate; the grim Phantom sat cowering on its floor. It hath taken up its abode in the city of Dread. And what in truth are these would-be builders of a new world? Like the students who have vainly struggled after our supreme science, they have attempted what is beyond their power; they have passed from this solid earth of usages and forms, into the land of shadow; and its loathsome keeper has seized them as its prey. I looked into the tyrant's shuddering soul, as it trembled past me. There, amidst the ruins of a thousand systems which aimed at virtue, sat Crime, and shivered at its desolation. Yet this man is the only Thinker, the only Aspirant, amongst them all. He still looks for a future of peace and mercy, to begin—ay! at what date! When he has swept away every foe. Fool! New foes spring from every drop of blood. Led by the eyes of the Unutterable, he is walking to his doom.

O Viola, thy innocence protects thee! Thou whom the sweet humanities of love shut out even from the dreams of aerial and spiritual beauty, making thy heart an universe of visions fairer than the wanderer over the rosy Hesperus can survey, shall not the same pure affection encompass thee even here, with a charmed atmosphere; and terror itself fall harmless on a life too innocent for wisdom?

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CHAPTER IV.

"Ombra più che di notte, in cui di luce
Raggio misto non è;
* * * *
Nè più il palagio appar, nè più le sue
Vestigia; nè dir puossi—egli qui fue." *
—*Ger. Lib.*, canto xvi.-lxix.

THE clubs are noisy with clamorous frenzy; the leaders are grim with schemes. Black Henriot flies here and there, muttering to his armed troops: "Robespierre, your beloved, is in danger!" Robespierre stalks perturbed, his list of victims swelling every hour. Tallien, the Macduff to the doomed Macbeth, is whispering courage to his pale conspirators. Along the streets heavily roll the tumbrils. The shops are closed; the people are gorged with gore and will lap no more. And night after night, to the eighty theatres flock the children of the Revolution, to laugh at the quips of comedy, and weep gentle tears over imaginary woes!

In a small chamber, in the heart of the city, sits the mother, watching over her child! It is quiet, happy noon; the sunlight, broken by the tall roofs in the narrow street, comes yet through the open casement, the impartial playfellow of the air, gleesome alike in temple and prison, hall and hovel; as golden and as blithe, whether it laugh over the first hour of life, or quiver in its gay delight on the terror and agony of the last! The child, where it lay at the feet of Viola, stretched out its dimpled hands as if to clasp the dancing motes that revelled in the beam. The mother turned her eyes from the glory; it saddened her yet more. She turned and sighed.

Is this the same Viola who bloomed fairer than their own Idalia under the skies of Greece? How changed! How pale and worn! She sat listlessly, her arms dropping on her knee; the smile that was habitual to her lips was gone. A heavy, dull despondency, as if the life of life were no more, seemed to weigh down her youth, and make it weary of that happy sun! In truth, her existence had languished away since it had wandered, as some melancholy stream, from the source that fed it. The sudden enthusiasm of fear or superstition that had almost, as if still in the unconscious movements of a dream, led her to fly from Zanoni, had ceased from the day which dawned upon her in a foreign land. Then—there—she felt that in the smile

* Darkness greater than of night, in which not a ray of light is mixed; . . . The palace appears no more—not even a vestige—nor can one say that it has been.

she had evermore abandoned lived her life. She did not repent, she would not have recalled the impulse that winged her flight. Though the enthusiasm was gone, the superstition yet remained; she still believed she had saved her child from that dark and guilty sorcery, concerning which the traditions of all lands are prodigal, but in none do they find such credulity, or excite such dread, as in the south of Italy. This impression was confirmed by the mysterious conversations of Glyndon, and by her own perception of the fearful change that had passed over one who represented himself as the victim of the enchanters. She did not, therefore, repent, but her very volition seemed gone.

On their arrival at Paris, Viola saw her companion, the faithful wife, no more. Ere three weeks were passed, husband and wife had ceased to live.

And now, for the first time, the drudgeries of this hard earth claimed the beautiful Neapolitan. In that profession, giving voice and shape to poetry and song, in which her first years were passed, there is, while it lasts, an excitement in the art that lifts it from the labor of a calling. Hovering between two lives, the Real and the Ideal, dwells the life of music and the stage. But that life was lost evermore to the idol of the eyes and ears of Naples. Lifted to the higher realm of passionate love, it seemed as if the fictitious genius which represents the thoughts of others was merged in the genius that grows all thought itself. It had been the worst infidelity to the Lost, to have descended again to live on the applause of others. And so—for she would not accept alms from Glyndon—so, by the commonest arts, the humblest industry that the sex knows, alone and unseen, she who had slept on the breast of Zanoni found a shelter for their child. As when, in the noble verse prefixed to this chapter, Armida herself has destroyed her enchanted palace, not a vestige of that bower, raised of old by Poetry and Love, remained to say "it had been!"

And the child avenged the father: it bloomed; it thrived; it waxed strong in the light of life. But still it seemed haunted and preserved by some other being than her own. In its sleep there was that slumber, so deep and rigid, which a thunderbolt could not have disturbed; and in such sleep often it moved its arms, as to embrace the air: often its lips stirred with murmured sounds of indistinct affection—*not for her;* and all the while upon its cheeks a hue of such celestial bloom, upon its lips a smile of such mysterious joy! Then when it waked, its eyes did not turn first to *her*—wistful, earn-

est, wandering, they roved around, to fix on her pale face, at last, in mute sorrow and reproach.

Never had Viola felt before how mighty was her love for Zanoni ; how thought, feeling, heart, soul, life—all lay crushed and dormant in the icy absence to which she had doomed herself ! She heard not the roar without, she felt not one amidst those stormy millions—worlds of excitement laboring through every hour. Only when Glyndon, haggard, wan, and spectre-like, glided in, day after day, to visit her, did the fair daughter of the careless South know how heavy and universal was the Death-Air that girt her round. Sublime in her passive unconsciousness, her mechanic life, she sat, and feared not, in the den of the Beasts of Prey !

The door of the room opened abruptly, and Glyndon entered. His manner was more agitated than usual.

"Is it you, Clarence ?" she said in her soft, languid tones. "You are before the hour I expected you."

"Who can count on his hours at Paris ?" returned Glyndon with a frightful smile. "Is it not enough that I am here ? Your apathy in the midst of these sorrows appals me. You say calmly, 'Farewell !' Calmly you bid me 'Welcome !' As if in every corner there was not a spy, and as if with every day there was not a massacre !"

"Pardon me ! But in these walls lies my world. I can hardly credit all the tales you tell me. Everything here, save *that* (and she pointed to the infant), seems already so lifeless, that in the tomb itself one could scarcely less heed the crimes that are done without."

Glyndon paused for a few moments, and gazed with strange and mingled feelings upon that face and form, still so young, and yet so invested with that saddest of all repose—when the heart feels old.

"Oh Viola !" said he, at last ; and in a voice of suppressed passion ; "was it thus I ever thought to see you, ever thought to feel for you, when we two first met in the gay haunts of Naples ? Ah ! why then did you refuse my love ? Or why was mine not worthy of you ? Nay, shrink not ! Let me touch your hand. No passion so sweet as that youthful love can return to me again. I feel for you but as a brother for some younger and lonely sister. With you, in your presence, sad though it be, I seem to breathe back the purer air of my early life. Here alone, except in scenes of turbulence and tempest, the Phantom ceases to pursue me. I forget even the Death that stalks behind, and haunts me as my shadow. But better

days may be in store for us yet. Viola, I at last begin dimly to perceive how to baffle and subdue the Phantom that has cursed my life—it is to brave, and defy it. In sin and in riot, as I have told thee, it haunts me not. But I comprehend now what Mejnour said in his dark apothegms, 'that I should dread the spectre most *when unseen.*' In virtuous and calm resolution it appears—ay, I behold it now—there—there, with its livid eyes! (and the drops fell from his brow). But it shall no longer daunt me from that resolution. I face it, and it gradually darkens back into the shade." He paused, and his eyes dwelt with a terrible exultation upon the sunlit space; then, with a heavy and deep-drawn breath, he resumed: "Viola, I have found the means of escape. We will leave this city. In some other land we will endeavor to comfort each other, and forget the past."

"No," said Viola calmly; "I have no further wish to stir, till I am borne hence to the last resting-place. I dreamed of him last night, Clarence! Dreamed of him for the first time since we parted: and, do not mock me, methought that he forgave the deserter, and called me, 'Wife.' That dream hallows the room. Perhaps it will visit me again before I die."

"Talk not of him—of the demi-fiend!" cried Glyndon fiercely, and stamping his foot. "Thank the Heavens for any fate that hath rescued thee from him."

"Hush!" said Viola gravely. And as she was about to proceed, her eye fell upon the child. It was standing in the the very centre of that slanting column of light which the sun poured into the chamber; and the rays seemed to surround it as a halo, and settled, crown-like, on the gold of its shining hair. In its small shape, so exquisitely modelled; in its large, steady, tranquil eyes, there was something that awed, while it charmed the mother's pride. It gazed on Glyndon as he spoke, with a look which almost might have seemed disdain, and which Viola, at least, interpreted as a defence of the Absent, stronger than her own lips could frame.

Glyndon broke the pause.

"Thou wouldst stay,—for what? To betray a mother's duty! If any evil happens to thee here, what becomes of thine infant? Shall it be brought up an orphan, in a country that has desecrated thy religion, and where human charity exists no more! Ah, weep, and clasp it to thy bosom! But tears do not protect and save."

"Thou hast conquered, my friend, I will fly with thee."

"To-morrow night, then, be prepared. I will bring thee the necessary disguises."

And Glyndon then proceeded to sketch rapidly the outline of the path they were to take, and the story they were to tell. Viola listened, but scarcely comprehended: he pressed her hand to his heart, and departed.

CHAPTER V.

"Van seco pur anco
Sdegno ed Amor, quasi due Veltri al fianco."*
—*Ger. Lib.* cant. xx. cxvii.

Glyndon did not perceive, as he hurried from the house, two forms crouching by the angle of the wall. He saw still the spectre gliding by his side, but he beheld not the yet more poisonous eyes of human envy and woman's jealousy that glared on his retreating footsteps.

Nicot advanced to the house; Fillide followed him in silence. The Painter, an old *sans-culotte*, knew well what language to assume to the porter. He beckoned the latter from his lodge: "How is this, Citizen? Thou harborest a '*suspect*.'"

"Citizen, you terrify me! If so, name him."

"It is not a man; a refugee—an Italian woman, lodges here."

"Yes, *au troisième*—the door to the left. But what of her? She cannot be dangerous, poor child!"

"Citizen, beware! Dost thou dare to pity her?"

"I? No, no, indeed. But—"

"Speak the truth! Who visits her?"

"No one but an Englishman."

"That is it—an Englishman, a spy of Pitt and Coburg."

"Just Heaven! Is it possible?"

"How, Citizen! Dost thou speak of Heaven? Thou must be an aristocrat!"

"No, indeed; it was but an old, bad habit, and escaped me unawares."

"How often does the Englishman visit her?"

"Daily."

Fillide uttered an exclamation.

"She never stirs out," said the porter. "Her sole occupations are in work, and care of her infant."

"Her infant!"

* There went with him still Disdain and Love, like two greyhounds side by side.

Fillide made a bound forward. Nicot in vain endeavored to arrest her. She sprung up the stairs; she paused not till she was before the door indicated by the porter; it stood ajar, she entered—she stood at the threshold, and beheld that face, still so lovely! The sight of so much beauty left her hopeless. And the child, over whom the mother bent!—she who had never been a mother! She uttered no sound—the furies were at work within her breast. Viola turned, and saw her; and, terrified by the strange apparition, with features that expressed the deadliest hate, and scorn, and vengeance, uttered a cry, and snatched the child to her bosom. The Italian laughed aloud, turned, descended, and gaining the spot were Nicot still conversed with the frightened porter, drew him from the house. When they were in the open street, she halted abruptly, and said: "Avenge me, and name thy price!"

"My price, sweet one, is but permission to love thee. Thou wilt fly with me to-morrow night; thou wilt possess thyself of the passports and the plan."

"And they—"

"Shall, before then, find their asylum in the Conciergerie. The guillotine shall requite thy wrongs."

"Do this, and I am satisfied," said Fillide firmly.

And they spoke no more, till they regained the house. But when she there, looking up to the dull building, saw the windows of the room which the belief of Glyndon's love had once made a paradise, the tiger relented at the heart; something of the woman gushed back upon her nature, dark and savage as it was. She pressed the arm on which she leant convulsively, and exclaimed: "No, no!—not him! Denounce her—let her perish; but I have slept on *his* bosom—not *him!*"

"It shall be as thou wilt," said Nicot, with a devil's sneer; "but he must be arrested for the moment. No harm shall happen to him, for no accuser shall appear. But her—thou wilt not relent for her?"

Fillide turned upon him her eyes, and their dark glance was sufficient answer.

CHAPTER VI.

"In poppa quella
Che guidar gli dovea, fatal Donzella."*
—*Ger. Lib.*, cant. xv. 3.

THE Italian did not overrate that craft of simulation proverbial with her country and her sex. Not a word, not a look

* By the prow was the fatal lady ordained to be the guide.

that day revealed to Glyndon the deadly change that had converted devotion into hate. He himself, indeed, absorbed in his own schemes, and in reflections on his own strange destiny, was no nice observer. But her manner, milder and more subdued than usual, produced a softening effect upon his meditations towards the evening; and he then began to converse with her on the certain hope of escape, and on the future that would await them in less unhallowed lands.

"And thy fair friend," said Fillide, with an averted eye and a false smile, "who was to be our companion? Thou hast resigned her, Nicot tells me, in favor of one in whom he is interested. Is it so?"

"He told thee this!" returned Glyndon evasively. "Well! Does the change content thee?"

"Traitor!" muttered Fillide; and she rose suddenly, approached him, parted the long hair from his forehead, caressingly, and pressed her lips convulsively on his brow.

"This were too fair a head for the doomsman," said she, with a slight laugh, and, turning away, appeared occupied in preparations for their departure.

The next morning, when he rose, Glyndon did not see the Italian; she was absent from the house when he left it. It was necessary that he should once more visit C——, before his final departure, not only to arrange for Nicot's participation in the flight, but lest any suspicion should have arisen to thwart or endanger the plan he had adopted. C——, though not one of the immediate coterie of Robespierre, and indeed secretly hostile to him, had possessed the art of keeping well with each faction as it rose to power. Sprung from the dregs of the populace, he had, nevertheless, the grace and vivacity so often found impartially amongst every class in France. He had contrived to enrich himself—none knew how—in the course of his rapid career. He became, indeed, ultimately one of the wealthiest proprietors of Paris, and at that time kept a splendid and hospitable mansion. He was one of those whom, from various reasons, Robespierre deigned to favor; and he had often saved the proscribed and suspected, by procuring them passports under disguised names, and advising their method of escape. But C—— was a man who took this trouble only for the rich. "The incorruptible Maximilien," who did not want the tyrant's faculty of penetration, probably saw through all his manœuvres, and the avarice which he cloaked beneath his charity. But it was noticeable that Robespierre frequently seemed to wink at, nay, partially to encourage, such vices in

men whom he meant hereafter to destroy, as would tend to lower them in the public estimation, and to contrast with his own austere and unassailable integrity and *purism*. And, doubtless, he often grimly smiled in his sleeve at the sumptuous mansion, and the griping covetousness of the worthy citizen C——.

To this personage, then, Glyndon musingly bent his way. It was true, as he had darkly said to Viola, that in proportion as he had resisted the spectre, its terrors had lost their influence. The time had come at last, when, seeing crime and vice in all their hideousness, and in so vast a theatre, he had found that in vice and crime there are deadlier horrors than in the eyes of a phantom-fear. His native nobleness began to return to him. As he passed the streets, he revolved in his mind projects of future repentance and reformation. He even meditated, as a just return for Fillide's devotion, the sacrifice of all the reasonings of his birth and education. He would repair whatever errors he had committed against her, by the self-immolation of marriage with one little congenial with himself. He who had once revolted from marriage with the noble and gentle Viola!—he had learned in that world of wrong to know that right is right, and that Heaven did not make the one sex to be the victim of the other. The young visions of the Beautiful and the Good rose once more before him; and along the dark ocean of his mind lay the smile of reawakening virtue, as a path of moonlight. Never, perhaps, had the condition of his soul been so elevated and so unselfish.

In the mean while, Jean Nicot, equally absorbed in dreams of the future, and already in his own mind laying out to the best advantage the gold of the friend he was about to betray, took his way to the house honored by the residence of Robespierre. He had no intention to comply with the relenting prayer of Fillide, that the life of Glyndon should be spared. He thought with Barrère, "*il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas.*" In all men who have devoted themselves to any study, or any art, with sufficient pains to attain a certain degree of excellence, there must be a fund of energy immeasurably above that of the ordinary herd. Usually this energy is concentred on the objects of their professional ambition, and leaves them, therefore, apathetic to the other pursuits of men. But where those objects are denied, where the stream has not its legitimate vent, the energy, irritated and aroused, possesses the whole being, and if not wasted on desultory schemes, or if not purified by conscience and principle, becomes a dangerous

and destructive element in the social system, through which it wanders in riot and disorder. Hence, in all wise monarchies, nay, in all well-constituted States, the peculiar care with which channels are opened for every art and every science; hence the honor paid to their cultivators by subtle and thoughtful statesmen, who, perhaps, for themselves see nothing in a picture but colored canvas, nothing in a problem but an ingenious puzzle. No State is ever more in danger than when the talent that should be consecrated to peace has no occupation but political intrigue or personal advancement. Talent unhonored is talent at war with men. And here it is noticeable, that the class of Actors having been the most degraded by the public opinion of the old *régime*, their very dust deprived of Christian burial, no men (with certain exceptions in the company especially favored by the Court) were more relentless and revengeful among the scourges of the Revolution. In the savage Collot d'Herbois, *mauvais comédien*, were embodied the wrongs and the vengeance of a class.

Now the energy of Jean Nicot had never been sufficiently directed to the Art he professed. Even in his earliest youth, the political disquisitions of his master, David, had distracted him from the more tedious labors of the easel. The defects of his person had embittered his mind; the Atheism of his benefactor had deadened his conscience. For one great excellence of Religion—above all, the Religion of the Cross—is, that it raises PATIENCE first into a Virtue, and next into a Hope. Take away the doctrine of another life, of requital hereafter, of the smile of a Father upon our sufferings and trials in our ordeal here, and what becomes of Patience? But without patience, what is man? And what a people? Without patience, Art never can be high; without patience, Liberty never can be perfected. By wild throes, and impetuous, aimless struggles, Intellect seeks to soar from Penury, and a nation to struggle into Freedom. And woe, thus unfortified, guideless, and unenduring, woe to both!

Nicot was a villain as a boy. In most criminals, however abandoned, there are touches of humanity, relics of virtue; and the true delineator of mankind often incurs the taunt of bad hearts and dull minds, for showing that even the worst alloy has some particles of gold, and even the best that come stamped from the mint of Nature have some adulteration of the dross. But there are exceptions, though few, to the general rule; exceptions, when the conscience lies utterly dead, and when good or bad are things indifferent but as means to some

selfish end. So was it with the *protégé* of the atheist. Envy and hate filled up his whole being, and the consciousness of superior talent only made him curse the more all who passed him in the sunlight with a fairer form or happier fortunes. But monster though he was when his murderous fingers griped the throat of his benefactor, Time, and that ferment of all evil passions, the Reign of Blood, had made in the deep hell of his heart a deeper still. Unable to exercise his calling (for even had he dared to make his name prominent, revolutions are no season for painters; and no man—no, not the richest and proudest magnate of the land, has so great an interest in peace and order, has so high and essential a stake in the well-being of society, as the poet and the artist), his whole intellect, ever restless and unguided, was left to ponder over the images of guilt most congenial to it. He had no Future but in this life; and how in this life had the men of power around him, the great wrestlers for dominion, thriven? All that was good, pure, unselfish, whether among Royalists or Republicans, swept to the shambles, and the deathsmen left alone in the pomp and purple of their victims! Nobler paupers than Jean Nicot would despair; and Poverty would rise in its ghastly multitudes to cut the throat of Wealth, and then gash itself limb by limb, if Patience, the Angel of the Poor, sat not by its side, pointing with solemn finger to the life to come! And now as Nicot neared the house of the Dictator, he began to meditate a reversal of his plans of the previous day: not that he faltered in his resolution to denounce Glyndon, and Viola would necessarily share his fate, as a companion and accomplice,—no, *there* he was resolved! For he hated both (to say nothing of his old but never-to-be-forgotten grudge against Zanoni); Viola had scorned him, Glyndon had served, and the thought of gratitude was as intolerable to him as the memory of insult. But why, now, should he fly from France? He could possess himself of Glyndon's gold; he doubted not that he could so master Fillide by her wrath and jealousy that he could command her acquiescence in all he proposed. The papers he had purloined—Desmoulin's correspondence with Glyndon—while it ensured the fate of the latter, might be eminently serviceable to Robespierre; might induce the tyrant to forget his own old *liaisons* with Hébert, and enlist him among the allies and tools of the King of Terror. Hopes of advancement, of wealth, of a career, again rose before him. This correspondence, dated shortly before Camille Desmoulins' death, was written with that careless and daring imprudence which characterized the spoiled

child of Danton. It spoke openly of designs against Robespierre ; it named confederates whom the tyrant desired only a popular pretext to crush. It was a new instrument of death in the hands of the Death-compeller. What greater gift could he bestow on Maximilien the Incorruptible ?

Nursing these thoughts he arrived at last before the door of Citizen Dupleix. Around the threshold were grouped, in admired confusion, some eight or ten sturdy Jacobins, the voluntary body-guard of Robespierre : tall fellows, well armed, and insolent with the power that reflects power, mingled with women, young and fair, and gayly dressed, who had come upon the rumor that Maximilien had had an attack of bile, to inquire tenderly of his health ; for Robespierre, strange though it seem, was the idol of the sex !

Through this *cortège*, stationed without the door, and reaching up the stairs to the landing-place, for Robespierre's apartments were not spacious enough to afford sufficient ante-chamber for levees so numerous and miscellaneous, Nicot forced his way ; and far from friendly or flattering were the expressions that regaled his ears.

"*Aha, le joli Polichinelle!*" said a comely matron, whose robe his obtrusive and angular elbows cruelly discomposed. "But how could one expect gallantry from such a scarecrow !"

"Citizen, I beg to avise thee * that thou art treading on my feet. I beg thy pardon, but now I look at thine, I see the hall is not wide enough for them."

"Ho, Citizen Nicot," cried a Jacobin, shouldering his formidable bludgeon, "and what brings thee hither? Thinkest thou that Hébert's crimes are forgotten already? Off, sport of Nature, and thank the *Etre Suprême* that he made thee insignificant enough to be forgiven."

"A pretty face to look out of the National Window," † said the woman whose robe the painter had ruffled.

"Citizens," said Nicot, white with passion, but constraining himself so that his words seemed to come from his grinded teeth, "I have the honor to inform you that I seek the *Représentant* upon business of the utmost importance to the public and himself ; and," he added, slowly, and malignantly glaring round, "I call all good citizens to be my witnesses when I shall

* The courteous use of the plural was proscribed at Paris. The *Sociétés Populaires* had decided that whoever used it should be prosecuted as *suspect et adulateur!* At the door of the public administrations and popular societies was written up: "Ici on s'honore du Citoyen, *et on se tutoye*"!!! * Take away Murder from the French Revolution, and it becomes the greatest Farce ever played before the Angels !

* Here they respect the title of Citizen, and they *thee* and *thou* one another.

† The Guillotine.

complain to Robespierre of the reception bestowed on me by some amongst you."

There was in the man's look and his tone of voice so much of deep and concentrated malignity that the idlers drew back; and as the remembrance of the sudden ups and downs of revolutionary life occurred to them, several voices were lifted to assure the squalid and ragged painter that nothing was farther from their thoughts than to offer affront to a citizen, whose very appearance proved him to be an exemplary *sans-culotte*. Nicot received these apologies in sullen silence; and folding his arms leant against the wall, waiting in grim patience for his admission.

The loiterers talked to each other in separate knots of two and three; and through the general hum rung the clear, loud, careless whistle of the tall Jacobin who stood guard by the stairs. Next to Nicot, an old woman and a young virgin were muttering in earnest whispers, and the atheist painter chuckled inly to overhear their discourse.

"I assure thee, my dear," said the crone, with a mysterious shake of head, "that the divine Catherine Theot, whom the impious now persecute, is really inspired. There can be no doubt that the elect, of whom Dom Gerle and the virtuous Robespierre are destined to be the two grand prophets, will enjoy eternal life here, and exterminate all their enemies. There is no doubt of it, not the least!"

"How delightful!" said the girl; "*ce cher Robespierre!* He does not look very long-lived either!"

"The greater the miracle," said the old woman. "I am just eighty-one, and I don't feel a day older since Catherine Theot promised me I should be one of the elect!"

Here the women were jostled aside by some new-comers, who talked loud and eagerly.

"Yes," cried a brawny man whose garb denoted him to be a butcher, with bare arms, and a cap of liberty on his head, "I am come to warn Robespierre. They lay a snare for him; they offer him the Palais National. *On ne peut être ami du peuple et habiter un palais.*" *

"No, indeed," answered a *cordonnier;* "I like him best in his little lodging with the *ménuisier:* it looks like one of *us*."

Another rush of the crowd, and a new group were thrown forward in the vicinity of Nicot. And these men gabbled and chattered faster and louder than the rest.

* No one can be a friend of the people, and dwell in a palace.—*Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre*, etc., vol. ii. p. 132.

"But my plan is—"

"*Au diable* with *your* plan. I tell you *my* scheme is—"

"Nonsense!" cried a third. "When Robespierre understands *my* new method of making gunpowder, the enemies of France shall—"

"Bah! who fears foreign enemies?" interrupted a fourth; "The enemies to be feared are at home. *My* new guillotine takes off fifty heads at a time!"

"But *my* new Constitution!" exclaimed a fifth.

"*My* new Religion, citizen!" murmured, complacently, a sixth.

"*Sacré mille tonnerres*, silence!" roared forth one of the Jacobin guard.

And the crowd suddenly parted as a fierce-looking man, buttoned up to the chin, his sword rattling by his side, his spurs clinking at his heel, descended the stairs; his cheeks swollen and purple with intemperance, his eyes dead and savage as a vulture's. There was a still pause, as all, with pale cheeks, made way for the relentless Henriot.* Scarce had this gruff and iron minion of the tyrant stalked through the throng, than a new movement of respect, and agitation, and fear, swayed the increasing crowd, as there glided in, with the noiselessness of a shadow, a smiling, sober citizen, plainly but neatly clad, with a downcast, humble eye. A milder, meeker face, no pastoral poet could assign to Corydon or Thyrsis—why did the crowd shrink and hold their breath? As the ferret in a burrow crept that slight form amongst the larger and rougher creatures that huddled and pressed back on each other as he passed. A wink of his stealthy eye, and the huge Jacobins left the passage clear, without sound or question. On he went to the apartment of the tyrant; and thither will we follow him.

CHAPTER VII.

"Constitutum est ut quisquis eum *hominem*, dixisset, fuisse, capitalem penderet pœnam."†—St. Aug., *Of the God Serapis*, 1, 18, *de Civ. Dei*, c. 5.

Robespierre was reclining languidly in his fauteuil, his cadaverous countenance more jaded and fatigued than usual. He to whom Catherine Theot assured immortal life looked,

* Or Hanriot. It is singular how undetermined are not only the characters of the French Revolution, but even the spelling of their names. With the historians it is Vergniaud; with the journalists of the time, it is Vergniaux. With one authority it is Robespierre; with another, Robespierre.

† It was decreed, that whoso should say that he had been a *man* should suffer the punishment of a capital offence.

indeed, like a man at death's door. On the table before him was a dish heaped with oranges, with the juice of which it is said that he could alone assuage the acrid bile that overflowed his system. And an old woman, richly dressed (she had been a Marquise in the old *régime*), was employed in peeling the Hesperian fruits for the sick Dragon, with delicate fingers covered with jewels. I have before said that Robespierre was the idol of the women. Strange, certainly!—but then they were French women! The old Marquise, who, like Catherine Theot, called him "son," really seemed to love him piously and disinterestedly as a mother, and as she peeled the oranges, and heaped on him the most caressing and soothing expressions, the livid ghost of a smile fluttered about his meagre lips. At a distance, Payan and Couthon, seated at another table, were writing rapidly, and occasionally pausing from their work, to consult with each other in brief whispers.

Suddenly, one of the Jacobins opened the door, and approaching Robespierre, whispered to him the name of Guérin.† At that word the sick man started up, as if new life were in the sound.

"My kind friend," he said to the Marquise, "forgive me; I must dispense with thy tender cares. France demands me. I am never ill when I can serve my country!"

The old Marquise lifted up her eyes to heaven, and murmured: "*Quel ange!*"

Robespierre waved his hand impatiently; and the old woman, with a sigh, patted his pale cheek, kissed his forehead, and submissively withdrew. The next moment, the smiling, sober man we have before described stood, bending low, before the tyrant. And well might Robespierre welcome one of the subtlest agents of his power; one on whom he relied more than the clubs of his Jacobins, the tongues of his orators, the bayonets of his armies; Guérin, the most renowned of his *écouteurs*, the searching, prying, universal, omnipresent spy, who glided like a sunbeam through chink and crevice, and brought to him intelligence not only of the deeds, but the hearts of men!

"Well, citizen, well!—and what of Tallien?"

"This morning, early, two minutes after eight, he went out."

"So early? Hem!"

"He passed Rue des Quatre Fils, Rue du Temple, Rue de

† See, for the espionage on which Guérin was employed, Les Papiers inédits, etc., vol. i. p. 366. No. XXVIII.

La Réunion, au Marais, Rue Martin ; nothing observable, except that—"

"That what?"

"He amused himself at a stall, in bargaining for some books."

"Bargaining for books! Aha, the charlatan! he would cloak the *intriguant* under the *savant!* Well!"

"At last, in the Rue des Fosses Montmartre, an individual, in a blue surtout (unknown) accosted him. They walked together about the street some minutes, and were joined by Legendre."

"Legendre! Approach, Payan! Legendre, thou hearest!"

"I went into a fruit-stall, and hired two little girls to go and play at ball within hearing. They heard Legendre say, 'I believe his power is wearing itself out.' And Tallien answered: 'And *himself*, too. I would not give three months' purchase for his life.' I do not know, citizen, if they meant *thee?*"

"Nor I, citizen," answered Robespierre, with a fell smile, succeeded by an expression of gloomy thought. "Ha!" he muttered, "I am young yet, in the prime of life. I commit no excess. No; my constitution is sound—sound. Anything farther of Tallien?"

"Yes. The woman whom he loves—Teresa de Fontenai—who lies in prison, still continues to correspond with him; to urge him to save her by thy destruction. This my listeners overheard. His servant is the messenger between the prisoner and himself."

"So! The servant shall be seized in the open streets of Paris. The Reign of Terror is not over yet. With the letters found on him, if such their context, I will pluck Tallien from his benches in the Convention."

Robespierre rose, and after walking a few moments to and fro the room in thought, opened the door, and summoned one of the Jacobins without. To him he gave his orders for the watch and arrest of Tallien's servant; and then threw himself again into his chair. As the Jacobin departed, Guérin whispered:

"Is not that the citizen Aristides?"

"Yes; a faithful fellow, if he would wash himself, and not swear so much."

"Didst thou not guillotine his brother?"

"But Aristides denounced him."

"Nevertheless, are such men safe about thy person?"

"Humph! that is true." And Robespierre, drawing out his

pocket-book, wrote a memorandum in it, replaced it in his vest, and resumed :

"What else of Tallien ?"

"Nothing more. He and Legendre, with the unknown, walked to the Jardin Egalité, and there parted. I saw Tallien to his house. But I have other news. Thou badst me watch for those who threaten thee in secret letters."

"Guérin ! Hast thou detected them ? Hast thou—hast thou—"

And the tyrant, as he spoke, opened and shut both his hands, as if already grasping the lives of the writers, and one of those convulsive grimaces, that seemed like an epileptic affection, to which he was subject, distorted his features.

"Citizen, I think I have found one. Thou must know, that, amongst those most disaffected, is the painter, Nicot."

"Stay, stay !" said Robespierre, opening a manuscript book, bound in red morocco (for Robespierre was neat and precise, even in his death-lists), and turning to an alphabetical index : "Nicot ! I have him—atheist, *sans-culotte* (I hate slovens) friend of Hébert ! Aha ! N.B. Réné Dumas knows of his early career, and crimes. Proceed !"

"This Nicot has been suspected of diffusing tracts and pamphlets against thyself, and the *Comité*. Yesterday evening, when he was out, his porter admitted me into his apartment, Rue Beau-Repaire. With my master-key I opened his desk and escritoire. I found therein a drawing of thyself at the guillotine ; and underneath was written : '*Bourreau de-ton pays, lis l'arrêt de ton châtiment !*' * I compared the words with the fragments of the various letters thou gavest me : the handwriting tallies with one. See, I tore off the writing."

Robespierre looked, smiled, and, as if his vengeance were already satisfied, threw himself on his chair. "It is well ! I feared it was a more powerful enemy. This man must be arrested at once."

"And he waits below. I brushed by him as I ascended the stairs."

"Does he so ? Admit ! Nay—hold ! hold ! Guérin, withdraw into the inner chamber till I summon thee again. Dear Payan, see that this Nicot conceals no weapons."

Payan, who was as brave as Robespierre was pusillanimous, repressed the smile of disdain that quivered on his lips a moment, and left the room.

Meanwhile Robespierre, with his head buried in his bosom,

* Executioner of thy country, read the decree of thy punishment.

seemed plunged in deep thought. "Life is a melancholy thing, Couthon!" said he suddenly.

"Begging your pardon, I think death worse," answered the philanthropist gently.

Robespierre made no rejoinder, but took from his *portefeuille* that singular letter which was found afterwards amongst his papers, and is marked LXI. in the published collection.*

"Without doubt," it began, "you are uneasy at not having earlier received news from me. Be not alarmed; you know that I ought only to reply by our ordinary courier; and as he has been interrupted *dans sa dernière course*, that is the cause of my delay. When you receive this, employ all diligence to fly a theatre where you are about to appear and disappear for the last time. It were idle to recall to you all the reasons that expose you to peril. The last step that should place you *sur le sopha de la présidence*, but brings you to the scaffold; and the mob will spit on your face as it has spat on those whom you have judged. Since, then, you have accumulated here a sufficient treasure for existence, I await you with great impatience, to laugh with you at the part you have played in the troubles of a nation as credulous as it is avid of novelties. Take your part according to our arrangements—all is prepared. I conclude—our courier waits. I expect your reply."

Musingly and slowly the Dictator devoured the contents of this epistle. "No," he said to himself—"no; he who has tasted power can no longer enjoy repose. Yet, Danton, Danton! thou wert right; better to be a poor fisherman, than to govern men." †

The door opened, and Payan reappeared and whispered Robespierre: "All is safe! See the man."

The Dictator, satisfied, summoned his attendant Jacobin to conduct Nicot to his presence. The painter entered with a fearless expression in his deformed features, and stood erect before Robespierre, who scanned him with a sidelong eye.

It is remarkable that most of the principal actors of the Revolution were singularly hideous in appearance: from the colossal ugliness of Mirabeau and Danton, or the villanous ferocity in the countenances of David and Simon, to the filthy squalor of Marat, the sinister and bilious meanness of the Dictator's features. But Robespierre, who was said to resemble a cat, had also a cat's cleanness; and his prim and dainty dress, his shaven smoothness, the womanly whiteness of his lean hands, made yet

* Papiers inédits, etc., vol. ii. p. 156.

† "*Il vaudrait mieux*," said Danton, in his dungeon, "*être un pauvre pêcheur que de gouverner les hommes.*"

more remarkable the disorderly ruffianism that characterized the attire and mien of the painter-*sans-culotte*.

"And so, citizen," said Robespierre mildly, "thou wouldst speak with me? I know thy merits and civism have been overlooked too long. Thou wouldst ask some suitable provision in the State? Scruple not—say on!"

"Virtuous Robespierre, *toi qui éclaires l'univers*,* I come not to ask a favor, but to render service to the State. I have discovered a correspondence that lays open a conspiracy, of which many of the actors are yet unsuspected." And he placed the papers on the table. Robespierre seized, and ran his eye over them rapidly and eagerly.

"Good! Good!" he muttered to himself; this is all I wanted. Barrère—Legendre! I have them! Camille Desmoulins was but their dupe. I loved him once; I never loved them! Citizen Nicot, I thank thee. I observe these letters are addressed to an Englishman. What Frenchman but must distrust these English wolves in sheep's clothing! France wants no longer citizens of the world; that farce ended with Anacharsis Clootz. I beg pardon, Citizen Nicot; but Clootz and Hébert were *thy* friends."

"Nay," said Nicot apologetically, "we are all liable to be deceived. I ceased to honor them whom thou didst declare against; for I disown my own senses rather than thy justice."

"Yes, I pretend to justice; that *is* the virtue I affect," said Robespierre meekly; and with his feline propensities he enjoyed, even in that critical hour of vast schemes, of imminent danger, of meditated revenge, the pleasure of playing with a solitary victim.† "And my justice shall no longer be blind to thy services, good Nicot. Thou knowest this Glyndon?"

"Yes, well—intimately. He *was* my friend, but I would give up my brother if he were one of the '*indulgents*.' I am not ashamed to say, that I have received favors from this man."

"Aha! and thou dost honestly hold the doctrine that where a man threatens my life, all personal favors are to be forgotten?"

"All!"

"Good citizen! Kind Nicot! Oblige me by writing the address of this Glyndon."

Nicot stooped to the table; and, suddenly, when the pen was in his hand, a thought flashed across him, and he paused, embarrassed and confused.

* Thou who enlightenest the world.

† The most detestable anecdote of this peculiar hypocrisy in Robespierre is that in which he is recorded to have tenderly pressed the hand of his old school-friend, Camille Desmoulins, the day that he signed the warrant for his arrest.

"Write on, *kind* Nicot!"

The painter slowly obeyed.

"Who are the other familiars of Glyndon?"

"It was on that point I was about to speak to thee, *Représentant*," said Nicot. "He visits daily a woman, a foreigner, who knows all his secrets; she affects to be poor, and to support her child by industry. But she is the wife of an Italian of immense wealth, and there is no doubt that she has moneys which are spent in corrupting the citizens. She should be seized and arrested."

"Write down her name also."

"But no time is to be lost; for I know that both have a design to escape from Paris this very night."

"Our government is prompt, good Nicot, never fear. Humph! Humph!" And Robespierre took the paper on which Nicot had written, and stooping over it—for he was near-sighted—added smilingly: "Dost thou always write the same hand, citizen? This seems almost like a disguised character."

"I should not like them to know who denounced them, *Représentant*."

"Good! Good! Thy virtue shall be rewarded, trust me. *Salut et fraternité!*"

Robespierre half rose as he spoke, and Nicot withdrew.

"Ho, there!—without!" cried the Dictator, ringing his bell; and as the ready Jacobin attended the summons: "Follow that man, Jean Nicot. The instant he has cleared the house seize him. At once to the Conciergerie with him! Stay! Nothing against the law; there is thy warrant. The public accuser shall have my instruction. Away! Quick!"

The Jacobin vanished. All trace of illness, of infirmity, had gone from the valetudinarian; he stood erect on the floor, his face twitching convulsively, and his arms folded. "Ho! Guérin! (the spy reappeared) "take these addresses! Within an hour this Englishman and this woman must be in prison; their revelations will aid me against worthier foes. They shall die; they shall perish with the rest on the 10th—the third day from this. There!" and he wrote hastily; "There, also, is thy warrant! Off!"

"And now, Couthon, Payan, we will dally no longer with Tallien and his crew. I have information that the Convention will *not* attend the Fête on the 10th. We must trust only to the sword of the law. I must compose my thoughts, prepare my harangue. To-morrow I will re-appear at the Convention;

to-morrow bold St. Just joins us, fresh from our victorious armies; to-morrow, from the tribune, I will dart the thunderbolt on the masked enemies of France; to-morrow I will demand, in the face of the country, the heads of the conspirators."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Le glaive est contre toi tourné des toutes parties."*
—La Harpe, *Jeanne de Naples*, act iv. sc. 4.

In the mean time, Glyndon, after an audience of some length with C——, in which the final preparations were arranged, sanguine of safety, and foreseeing no obstacle to escape, bent his way back to Fillide. Suddenly, in the midst of his cheerful thoughts, he fancied he heard a voice too well and too terribly recognized, hissing in his ear: "What! thou wouldst defy and escape me! Thou wouldst go back to virtue and content. It is in vain—it is too late. No, *I* will not haunt thee—*human* footsteps, no less inexorable, dog thee now. Me thou shalt not see again till in the dungeon, at midnight before thy doom! Behold!—"

And Glyndon, mechanically turning his head, saw, close behind him, the stealthy figure of a man whom he had observed before, but with little heed, pass and repass him, as he quitted the house of Citizen C——. Instantly and instinctively he knew that he was watched, that he was pursued. The street he was in was obscure and deserted, for the day was oppressively sultry, and it was the hour when few were abroad, either on business or pleasure. Bold as he was, an icy chill shot through his heart. He knew too well the tremendous system that then reigned in Paris, not to be aware of his danger. As the sight of the first plague-boil to the victim of the Pestilence, was the first sight of the shadowy spy to that of the Revolution; the watch, the arrest, the trial, the guillotine—these made the regular and rapid steps of the monster that the anarchists called Law! He breathed hard, he heard distinctly the loud beating of his heart. And so he paused, still and motionless, gazing upon the shadow that halted also behind him!

Presently, the absence of all allies to the spy, the solitude of the streets, reanimated his courage; he made a step towards his pursuer, who retreated as he advanced. "Citizen, thou followest me," he said. "Thy business?"

"Surely," answered the man, with a deprecating smile, "the

* The sword is raised against you on all sides.

streets are broad enough for both? Thou art not so bad a republican to arrogate all Paris to thyself!"

'Go on first, then. I make way for thee."

The man bowed, doffed his hat politely, and passed forward. The next moment Glyndon plunged into a winding lane, and fled fast through a labyrinth of streets, passages, and alleys. By degress he composed himself, and, looking behind, imagined that he had baffled the pursuer; he then, by a circuitous route, bent his way once more to his home. As he emerged into one of the broader streets, a passenger, wrapped in a mantle, brushing so quickly by him that he did not observe his countenance, whispered: "Clarence Glyndon, you are dogged—follow me!" and the stranger walked quickly before him. Clarence turned, and sickened once more to see at his heels, with the same servile smile on his face, the pursuer he fancied he had escaped. He forgot the injunction of the stranger to follow him, and perceiving a crowd gathered close at hand, round a caricature shop, dived amidst them, and, gaining another street, altered the direction he had before taken, and, after a long and breathless course, gained, without once more seeing the spy, a distant *quartier* of the city. Here, indeed, all seemed so serene and fair, that his artist eye, even in that imminent hour, rested with pleasure on the scene. It was a comparatively broad space, formed by one of the noble *quais*. The Seine flowed majestically along, with boats and craft resting on its surface. The sun gilt a thousand spires and domes, and gleamed on the white palaces of a fallen chivalry. Here, fatigued and panting, he paused an instant, and a cooler air from the river fanned his brow. "Awhile, at least, I am safe here," he murmured; and as he spoke, some thirty paces behind him, he beheld the spy. He stood rooted to the spot; wearied and spent as he was, escape seemed no longer possible—the river on one side (no bridge at hand) and the long row of mansions closing up the other. As he halted, he heard laughter and obscene songs, from a house a little in his rear, between himself and the spy. It was a café fearfully known in that quarter. Hither often resorted the black troop of Henriot—the minions and the *huissiers* of Robespierre. The spy, then, had hunted the victim within the jaws of the hounds. The man slowly advanced, and pausing before the opened window of the café, put his head through the aperture, as to address and summon forth its armed inmates.

At that very instant, and while the spy's head was thus turned from him, standing in the half-open gateway of the

house immediately before him, he perceived the stranger who had warned; the figure, scarcely distinguishable through the mantle that wrapped it, motioned to him to enter. He sprang noiselessly through the friendly opening; the door closed; breathlessly he followed the stranger up a flight of broad stairs, and through a suite of empty rooms, until, having gained a small cabinet, his conductor doffed the large hat and the long mantle that had hitherto concealed his shape and features, and Glyndon beheld Zanoni.

CHAPTER IX.

"Think not my magic wonders wrought by aid
Of Stygian angels summoned up from hell;
Scorned and accursed by those who have essay'd,
Her gloomy Dives and Afrites to compel.
But by perception of the secret powers
Of mineral springs, in nature's inmost cell,
Of herbs in curtain of her greenest bowers,
And of the moving stars o'er mountain tops and towers."
—WIFFEN'S *Translation of Tasso*, cant. xiv. xliii.

"YOU are safe here, young Englishman!" said Zanoni, motioning Glyndon to a seat. "Fortunate for you that I come on your track at last!"

"Far happier had it been if we had never met! Yet, even in these last hours of my fate, I rejoice to look once more on the face of that ominous and mysterious being to whom I can ascribe all the sufferings I have known. Here, then, thou shalt not palter with or elude me. Here, before we part, thou shalt unravel to me the dark enigma, if not of thy life, of my own!"

"Hast thou suffered? Poor Neophyte!" said Zanoni pityingly. "Yes, I see it on thy brow. But wherefore wouldst thou blame me? Did I not warn thee against the whispers of thy spirit? Did I not warn thee to forbear? Did I not tell thee that the ordeal was one of awful hazard and tremendous fears? Nay, did I not offer to resign to thee the heart that was mighty enough, while mine, Glyndon, to content me? Was it not thine own daring and resolute choice to brave the initiation! Of thine own free will didst thou make Mejnour thy master, and his law thy study!"

"But whence came the irresistible desires of that wild and unholy knowledge? I knew them not till thine evil eye fell upon me, and I was drawn into the magic atmosphere of thy being!"

"Thou errest! The desires were in thee; and whether in one direction or the other, would have forced their way! Man, thou askest me the enigma of thy fate and my own! Look round all being, is there not mystery everywhere? Can thine eye trace the ripening of the grain beneath the earth! In the moral and the physical world alike, lie dark portents, far more wondrous than the powers thou wouldst ascribe to me!"

"Dost thou disown those powers? Dost thou confess thyself an impostor! Or wilt thou dare to tell me that thou art indeed sold to the Evil One?—a magician, whose familiar has haunted me night and day!"

"It matters not what I am," returned Zanoni; "it matters only whether I can aid thee to exorcise thy dismal phantom, and return once more to the wholesome air of this common life. Something, however, will I tell thee, not to vindicate myself, but the Heaven and the Nature that thy doubts malign."

Zanoni paused a moment, and resumed with a slight smile:

"In thy younger days thou hast doubtless read with delight the great Christian poet, whose muse, like the morning it celebrated, came to earth 'crowned with flowers culled in Paradise.'* No spirit was more imbued with the knightly superstitions of the time; and surely the Poet of Jerusalem hath sufficiently, to satisfy even the Inquisitor he consulted, execrated all the practitioners of the unlawful spells invoked:

'Per isforzar Cocito o Flegetonte.'†

But in his sorrows and his wrongs, in the prison of his madhouse, know you not that Tasso himself found his solace, his escape, in the recognition of a holy and spiritual Theurgia—of a magic that could summon the Angel, or the Good Genius, not the Fiend? And do you not remember, how he, deeply versed as he was, for his age, in the mysteries of the nobler Platonism, which hints at the secrets of all the starry brotherhoods, from the Chaldæan to the later Rosicrucian, discriminates, in his lovely verse, between the black art of Ismeno, and the glorious lore of the Enchanter who counsels and guides upon their errand the Champions of the Holy Land? *His*, not the charms wrought by the aid of the Stygian Rebels;‡ but the

* "L'aurea lesta
Di rose colte in Paradiso infiora."
Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* iv. 1.

† To constrain Cocytus or Phlegethon.

‡ See this remarkable passage, which does indeed not unfaithfully represent the doctrine of the Pythagorean and the Platonist. In Tasso, cant. xiv., stanzas xli. to xlvii. (*Ger. Lib.*) They are beautifully translated by Wiffen.

perception of the secret powers of the fountain and the herb—the Arcana of the unknown nature and the various motions of the stars. His, the holy haunts of Lebanon and Carmel; beneath his feet he saw the clouds, the snows, the hues of Iris, the generations of the rains and dews. Did the Christian Hermit who converted that Enchanter (no fabulous being, but the type of all spirit that would aspire through Nature up to God), command him to lay aside these sublime studies, 'Le solite arte e l'uso mio'? No! but to cherish and direct them to worthy ends. And in this grand conception of the poet lies the secret of the true Theurgia, which startles your ignorance in a more learned day with puerile apprehensions, and the nightmares of a sick man's dreams."

Again Zanoni paused, and again resumed:

"In ages far remote, of a civilization far different from that which now merges the individual in the State, there existed men of ardent minds, and an intense desire of knowledge. In the mighty and solemn kingdoms in which they dwelt, there were no turbulent and earthly channels to work off the fever of their minds. Set in the antique mould of castes through which no intellect could pierce, no valor could force its way, the thirst for wisdom, alone, reigned in the hearts of those who received its study as a heritage from sire to son. Hence, even in your imperfect records of the progress of human knowledge you find that, in the earliest ages, Philosophy descended not to the business and homes of men. It dwelt amidst the wonders of the loftier creation; it sought to analyze the formation of matter, the essentials of the prevailing soul; to read the mysteries of the starry orbs; to dive into those depths of Nature in which Zoroaster is said, by the schoolmen, first to have discovered the arts which your ignorance classes under the name of magic. In such an age, then, arose some men who, amidst the vanities and delusions of their class, imagined that they detected gleams of a brighter and steadier lore. They fancied an affinity existing among all the works of Nature, and that in the lowliest lay the secret attraction that might conduct them upward to the loftiest.* Centuries passed, and lives were wasted in these discoveries; but step after step was chronicled and marked, and became the guide to the few who

* Agreeably, it would seem, to the notion of Iamblichus and Plotinus, that the universe is an animal; so that there is sympathy and communication between one part and the other; in the smallest part may be the subtlest nerve. And hence the universal magnetism of Nature. But man contemplates the universe as an animalcule would an elephant. The animalcule, seeing scarcely the tip of the hoof, would be incapable of comprehending that the trunk belonged to the same creature—that the effect produced upon one extremity would be felt in an instant by the other.

alone had the hereditary privilege to track their path. At last from this dimness upon some eyes the light broke; but think not, young visionary, that to those who nursed unholy thoughts, over whom the Origin of Evil held a sway, that dawning was vouchsafed. It could be given then, as now, only to the purest ecstacies of imagination and intellect, undistracted by the cares of a vulgar life, or the appetites of the common clay. Far from descending to the assistance of a fiend, theirs was but the august ambition to approach nearer to the Fount of Good; the more they emancipated themselves from this limbo of the planets, the more they were penetrated by the splendor and beneficence of God. And if they sought, and at last discovered, how to the eye of the Spirit all the subtler modifications of being and of matter might be made apparent; if they discovered how, for the wings of the Spirit, all space might be annihilated; and while the body stood heavy and solid here, as a deserted tomb, the freed *Idea* might wander from star to star; if such discoveries became in truth their own, the sublimest luxury of their knowledge was but this—to wonder, to venerate, and adore! For, as one not unlearned in these high matters has expressed it, 'There is a principle of the soul superior to all external nature, and through this principle we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world, and participating the immortal life and the energy of the Sublime Celestials. When the soul is elevated to natures above itself, it deserts the order to which it is awhile compelled, and by a religious magnetism is attracted to another, and a loftier, with which it blends and mingles.* Grant, then, that such beings found at last the secret to arrest death; to fascinate danger and the foe; to walk the revolutions of the earth unharmed; think you that this life could teach them other desire than to yearn the more for the Immortal, and to fit their intellect the better for the higher being to which they might, when Time and Death exist no longer, be transferred? Away with your gloomy phantasies of sorcerer and dæmon! The soul can aspire only to the light; and even the error of our lofty knowledge was but the forgetfulness of the weakness, the passions, and the bonds, which the death we so vainly conquered only can purge away!"

This address was so different from what Glyndon had anticipated, that he remained for some moments speechless, and at length faltered out:

"But why, then, to me—"

* From IAMBLICH., on the *Mysteries*, c. 7, sect. 7.

"Why," added Zanoni, "Why to thee have been only the penance and the terror—the Threshold and the Phantom? Vain man! look to the commonest elements of the common learning. Can every tyro at his mere wish and will become the master? Can the student, when he has bought his Euclid, become a Newton? Can the youth whom the Muses haunt, say, 'I will equal Homer?" Yea, can yon pale tyrant, with all the parchment-laws of a hundred system-shapers, and the pikes of his dauntless multitude, carve, at his will, a constitution not more vicious than the one which the madness of a mob could overthrow? When, in that far time to which I have referred, the student aspired to the heights to which thou wouldst have sprung at a single bound, he was trained from his very cradle to the career he was to run. The internal and the outward nature were made clear to his eyes, year after year, as they opened on the day. He was not admitted to the practical initiation till not one earthly wish chained that sublimest faculty which you call the IMAGINATION, one carnal desire clouded the penetrative essence that you call the INTELLECT. And even then, and at the best, how few attained to the last mystery! Happier inasmuch as they attained the earlier to the holy glories for which Death is the heavenliest gate."

Zanoni paused, and a shade of thought and sorrow darkened his celestial beauty.

"And are there, indeed, others, besides thee and Mejnour, who lay claim to thine attributes, and have attained to thy secrets?"

"Others there have been before us, but we two now are alone on earth."

"Impostor! thou betrayest thyself! If they could conquer Death, why live they not yet?"*

"Child of a day!" answered Zanoni mournfully, "Have I not told thee the error of our knowledge was the forgetfulness of the desires and passions which the spirit never can wholly and permanently conquer, while this matter chokes it? Canst thou think that it is no sorrow, either to reject all human ties, all friendship, and all love, or to see, day after day, friendship and love wither from our life, as blossoms from the stem. Canst thou wonder how, with the power to live while the world shall last, ere even our ordinary date be finished, we yet may prefer to die? Wonder rather that there are two who have clung so faithfully to earth! Me, I confess, that earth can enamour

* Glyndon appears to forget that Mejnour had before answered the very question which his doubts, here, a second time suggest.

yet. Attaining to the last secret while youth was in its bloom, youth still colors all around me with its own luxuriant beauty; to me, yet, to breathe is to enjoy. The freshness has not faded from the face of Nature, and not a herb in which I cannot discover a new charm—an undetected wonder. As with my youth, so with Mejnour's age; he will tell you, that life to him is but a power to examine; and not till he has exhausted all the marvels which the Creator has sown on earth, would he desire new habitations for the renewed Spirit to explore. We are the types of the two essences of what is imperishable—'ART, that enjoys, and SCIENCE, that contemplates!' And now, that thou mayest be contented that the secrets are not vouchsafed to thee, learn that so utterly must the idea detach itself from what makes up the occupation and excitement of men, so must it be void of whatever would covet, or love, or hate; that for the ambitious man, for the lover, the hater, the power avails not. And I, at last, bound and blinded by the most common of household ties—I, darkened and helpless, adjure thee, the baffled and discontented—I adjure thee to direct, to guide me;—where are they—Oh, tell me—speak! My wife—my child? Silent! Oh, thou knowest now that I am no sorcerer, no enemy. I cannot give thee what thy faculties deny; I cannot achieve what the passionless Mejnour failed to accomplish; but I can give thee the next best boon, perhaps the fairest: I can reconcile thee to the daily world, and place peace between thy conscience and thyself."

"Wilt thou promise?"

"By their sweet lives, I promise!"

Glyndon looked and believed. He whispered the address to the house whither his fatal step already had brought woe and doom.

"Bless thee for this," exclaimed Zanoni passionately, "and thou shalt be blessed! What! Couldst thou not perceive that at the entrance to all the grander worlds dwell the race that intimidate and awe? Who in the daily world ever left the old regions of Custom and Prescription, and felt not the first seizure of the shapeless and nameless Fear? Everywhere around thee, where men aspire and labor, though they see it not—in the closet of the sage, in the council of the demagogue, in the camp of the warrior—everywhere cowers and darkens the Unutterable Horror. But there, where thou hast ventured, alone is the phantom *visible*; and never will it cease to haunt, till thou canst pass to the Infinite, as the seraph, or return to the Familiar, as a child! But answer me this: When, seeking to

adhere to some calm resolve of virtue, the Phantom hath stalked suddenly to thy side; when its voice hath whispered thee despair; when its ghastly eyes would scare thee back to those scenes of earthly craft or riotous excitement, from which, as it leaves thee to worse foes to the soul, its presence is ever absent, hast thou never bravely resisted the spectre and thine own horror? Hast thou never said, 'Come what may, to Virtue I will cling'?"

"Alas!" answered Glyndon, "only of late have I dared to do so."

"And thou hast felt then that the Phantom grew more dim and its power more faint."

"It is true."

"Rejoice, then! Thou hast overcome the true terror and mystery of the ordeal. Resolve is the first success. Rejoice, for the exorcism is sure! Thou art not of those who, denying a life to come, are the victims of the Inexorable Horror. Oh, when shall men learn, at last, that if the Great Religion inculcates so rigidly the necessity of FAITH, it is not alone that FAITH leads to the world to be; but that without faith there is no excellence in this—faith in something wiser, happier, diviner, than we see on earth! The Artist calls it the Ideal; the Priest, Faith. The Ideal and Faith are one and the same. Return, O wanderer, return! Feel what beauty and holiness dwell in the Customary and the Old. Back to thy gateway glide, thou Horror! And calm, on the childlike heart, smile again, O azure Heaven, with thy night and thy morning-star but as one, though under its double name of Memory and Hope!"

As he thus spoke, Zanoni laid his hand gently on the burning temples of his excited and wondering listener; and presently a sort of trance came over him: he imagined that he was returned to the home of his infancy; that he was in the small chamber where, over his early slumbers, his mother had watched and prayed. There it was, visible, palpable, solitary, unaltered. In the recess, the homely bed; on the walls, the shelves filled with holy books; the very easel on which he had first sought to call the ideal to the canvas, dust-covered, broken, in the corner. Below the window lay the old churchyard; he saw it green in the distance, the sun glancing through the yew trees; he saw the tomb where father and mother lay united, and the spire pointing up to Heaven, the symbol of the hopes of those who consigned the ashes to the dust; in his ear rang the bells, pealing, as on a Sabbath day; far fled all the visions

of anxiety and awe that had haunted and convulsed; youth, boyhood, childhood, came back to him with innocent desires and hopes; he thought he fell upon his knees to pray. He woke—he woke in delicious tears; he felt that the phantom was fled forever. He looked round—Zanoni was gone. On the table lay these lines, the ink yet wet:

"I will find ways and means for thy escape. At nightfall, as the clock strikes nine, a boat shall wait thee on the river before this house, the boatman will guide thee to a retreat where thou mayst rest in safety, till the Reign of Terror, which nears its close, be past. Think no more of the sensual love that lured, and well-nigh lost, thee. It betrayed, and would have destroyed. Thou wilt regain thy land in safety, long years yet spared to thee to muse over the past, and to redeem it. For thy future, be thy dream thy guide, and thy tears thy baptism."

The Englishman obeyed the injunctions of the letter, and found their truth.

CHAPTER X.

"Quid mirare meas tot in uno corpore formas?" *

—PROPERT.

ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

* * * * * * *

"SHE is in one of their prisons—their inexorable prisons. It is Robespierre's order; I have tracked the cause to Glyndon. This, then, made that terrible connection between their fates which I could not unravel, but which (till severed as it now is) wrapped Glyndon himself in the same cloud that concealed her. In prison—in prison! It is the gate of the grave! Her trial, and the inevitable execution that follows such trial, is the third day from this. The tyrant has fixed all his schemes of slaughter for the 10th of Thermidor. While the deaths of the unoffending strike awe to the city, his satellites are to massacre his foes. There is but one hope left, that the Power which now dooms the doomer may render me an instrument to expedite his fall. But two days left—two days! In all my wealth of time I see but two days; all beyond—darkness, solitude. I may save her yet. The tyrant shall fall the day before that which he has set apart for slaughter! For the first time I mix among the broils and stratagems of men, and my mind leaps up from my despair, armed and eager for the contest."

* * * * * * *

A crowd had gathered round the Rue St. Honoré—a young

* Why wonder that I have so many forms in a single body?

man was just arrested by the order of Robespierre. He was known to be in the service of Tallien, that hostile leader in the Convention, whom the tyrant had hitherto trembled to attack. This incident had therefore produced a greater excitement than a circumstance so customary as an arrest in the Reign of Terror might be supposed to create. Amongst the crowd were many friends of Tallien, many foes to the tyrant, many weary of beholding the tiger dragging victim after victim to its den. Hoarse, foreboding murmurs were heard; fierce eyes glared upon the officers as they seized their prisoner; and though they did not yet dare openly to resist, those in the rear pressed on those behind, and encumbered the path of the captive and his captors. The young man struggled hard for escape, and, by a violent effort, at last wrenched himself from the grasp. The crowd made way, and closed round to protect him, as he dived and darted through their ranks; but suddenly the trampling of horses was heard at hand: the savage Henriot and his troop were bearing down upon the mob. The crowd gave way in alarm, and the prisoner was again seized by one of the partisans of the Dictator. At that moment a voice whispered the prisoner: "Thou hast a letter, which, if found on thee, ruins thy last hope. Give it to me! I will bear it to Tallien." The prisoner turned in amaze, read something that encouraged him in the eyes of the stranger who thus accosted him; the troop were now on the spot; the Jacobin who had seized the prisoner released hold of him for a moment, to escape the hoofs of the horses; in that moment the opportunity was found—the stranger has disappeared.

* * * * * * *

At the house of Tallien the principal foes of the tyrant were assembled. Common danger made common fellowship. All factions laid aside their feuds for the hour to unite against the formidable man who was marching over all factions to his gory throne. There, was bold Lecointre, the declared enemy; there, creeping Barrère, who would reconcile all extremes, the hero of the cowards; Barras, calm and collected; Collot d'Herbois, breathing wrath and vengeance, and seeing not that the crimes of Robespierre alone sheltered his own.

The council was agitated and irresolute. The awe which the uniform success and the prodigious energy of Robespierre excited, still held the greater part under its control. Tallien, whom the tyrant most feared, and who alone could give head and substance and direction to so many contradictory passions, was too sullied by the memory of his own cruelties, not to feel

embarrassed by his position as the champion of mercy. "It is true," he said, after an animating harangue from Lecointre, "that the Usurper menaces us all. But he is still so beloved by his mobs, still so supported by his Jacobins—better delay open hostilities till the hour is more ripe. To attempt and not succeed is to give us, bound hand and foot, to the guillotine. Every day his power must decline. Procrastination is our best ally—" While yet speaking, and while yet producing the effect of water on the fire, it was announced that a stranger demanded to see him instantly on business that brooked no delay.

"I am not at leisure," said the orator impatiently. The servant placed a note on the table. Tallien opened it, and found these words in pencil, "From the prison of Teresa de Fontenai." He turned pale, started up, and hastened to the anteroom, where he beheld a face entirely strange to him.

"Hope of France!" said the visitor to him, and the very sound of his voice went straight to the heart, "your servant is arrested in the streets. I have saved your life, and that of your wife who will be. I bring to you this letter from Teresa de Fontenai."

Tallien, with a trembling hand, opened the letter, and read: "Am I forever to implore you in vain? Again and again I say, Lose not an hour, if you value my life and your own. My trial and death are fixed the third day from this—the 10th Thermidor. Strike while it is yet time! Strike the monster!—you have two days yet. If you fail—if you procrastinate—see me for the last time as I pass your windows to the guillotine!"

"Her trial will give proof against you," said the stranger. "Her death is the herald of your own. Fear not the populace—the populace would have rescued your servant. Fear not Robespierre—he gives himself to your hands. To-morrow he comes to the Convention; to-morrow, you must cast the last throw for his head or your own."

"To-morrow he comes to the Convention! And who are you, that know so well what is concealed from me?"

"A man, like you, who would save the woman he loves."

Before Tallien could recover his surprise, the visitor was gone.

Back went the Avenger to his conclave, an altered man. "I have heard tidings—no matter what," he cried, "that have changed my purpose. On the 10th we are destined to the guillotine. I revoke my counsel for delay. Robespierre comes to the Convention to-morrow; *there* we must confront

and crush him. From the Mountain shall frown against him the grim shade of Danton; from the Plain shall rise, in their bloody cerements, the spectres of Vergniaud and Condorcet. *Frappons!*"

"*Frappons!*" cried even Barrère, startled into energy by the new daring of his colleague. "*Frappons! il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.*"

It was observable (and the fact may be found in one of the memoirs of the time) that, during that day and night (the 7th Thermidor), a stranger to all the previous events of that stormy time was seen in various parts of the city: in the cafés, the clubs, the haunts of the various factions; that, to the astonishment and dismay of his hearers, he talked aloud of the crimes of Robespierre, and predicted his coming fall; and as he spoke, he stirred up the hearts of men, he loosed the bonds of their fear, he inflamed them with unwonted rage and daring. But what surprised them most was, that no voice replied; no hand was lifted against him; no minion, even of the tyrant, cried, "Arrest the Traitor." In that impunity men read, as in a book, that the populace had deserted the man of blood.

Once only a fierce, brawny Jacobin sprung up from the table at which he sat, drinking deep, and, approaching the stranger, said: "I seize thee, in the name of the Republic."

"Citizen Aristides," answered the stranger, in a whisper, "go to the lodgings of Robespierre; he is from home, and in the left pocket of the vest, which he cast off not an hour since, thou wilt find a paper; when thou hast read that, return. I will await thee: and if thou wouldst then seize me, I will go without a struggle. Look round on those lowering brows, touch me *now*, and thou wilt be torn to pieces."

The Jacobin felt as if compelled to obey against his will. He went forth muttering: he returned, the stranger was still there: "*Mille tonnerres*," he said to him, "I thank thee; the poltroon had my name in his list for the guillotine."

With that the Jacobin Aristides sprung upon the table, and shouted "Death to the Tyrant!"

CHAPTER XI.

"Le lendemain, 8 Thermidor, Robespierre se décida à prononcer son fameux discours."—THIERS, *Hist. de la Revolution.*

THE morning rose—the 8th of Thermidor (July 26). Robespierre has gone to the Convention. He has gone, with his

* The next day, 8 Thermidor, Robespierre resolved to deliver his celebrated discourse.

labored speech ; he has gone, with his phrases of philanthropy and virtue ; he has gone to single out his prey. All his agents are prepared for his reception ; the fierce St. Just has arrived from the armies, to second his courage and inflame his wrath. His ominous apparition prepares the audience for the crisis. "Citizens !" screeched the shrill voice of Robespierre, "others have placed before you flattering pictures ; I come to announce to you useful truths.

* * * * * * *

And they attribute to me, to me alone, whatever of harsh or evil is committed ; it is Robespierre who wishes it ; it is Robespierre who ordains it. Is there a new tax ? It is Robespierre who ruins you. They call me tyrant ! And why ? Because I have acquired some influence ; but how ? In speaking truth ; and who pretends that truth is to be without force in the mouths of the Representatives of the French people ? Doubtless, Truth has its power, its rage, its despotism, its accents, touching, terrible, which resound in the pure heart, as in the guilty conscience ; and which Falsehood can no more imitate than Salmoneus could forge the thunderbolts of Heaven. What am I, whom they accuse ? A slave of liberty, a living martyr of the Republic, the victim, as the enemy, of crime ! All ruffianism affronts me ; and actions legitimate in others are crimes in me ; it is enough to know me to be calumniated. It is in my very zeal that they discover my guilt. Take from me my conscience and I should be the most miserable of men !"

He paused ; and Couthon wiped his eyes, and St. Just murmured applause, as with stern looks he gazed on the rebellious Mountain ; and there was a dead, mournful, and chilling silence through the audience. The touching sentiment woke no echo.

The orator cast his eyes around. Ho ! he will soon arouse that apathy. He proceeds : he praises, he pities himself, no more. He denounces, he accuses. Overflooded with his venom, he vomits it forth on all. At home, abroad, finances, war—on all ! Shriller and sharper rose his voice :

"A conspiracy exists against the Public Liberty. It owes its strength to a criminal coalition in the very bosom of the Convention ; it has accomplices in the bosom of the Committee of Public Safety. . . . What is the remedy to this evil ? To punish the traitors ; to purify the committee ; to crush all factions by the weight of the National Authority ; to raise upon their ruins the power of Liberty and Justice. Such are the principles of that Reform. Must I be ambitious to profess

them? Then the principles are proscribed, and Tyranny reigns amongst us! For what can you object to a man who is in the right, and has, at least, this knowledge—he knows how to die for his native land! I am made to combat crime, and not to govern it. The time, alas, is not yet arrived when men of worth can serve with impunity their country! So long as the knaves rule, the defenders of liberty will be only the proscribed."

For two hours through that cold and gloomy audience shrilled the Death-speech. In silence it began, in silence closed. The enemies of the orator were afraid to express resentment: they knew not yet the exact balance of power. His partisans were afraid to approve; they knew not whom of their own friends and relations the accusations were designed to single forth. "Take care!" whispered each to each, "it is thou whom he threatens." But silent though the audience, it was, at the first, well-nigh subdued. There was still about this terrible man the spell of an overmastering will. Always—though not what is called a great orator—resolute, and sovereign in the use of words, words seemed as things when uttered by one who with a nod moved the troops of Henriot, and influenced the judgment of Réné Dumas, grim President of the Tribunal. Lecointre of Versailles rose, and there was an anxious movement of attention; for Lecointre was one of the fiercest foes of the tyrant. What was the dismay of the Tallien faction, what the complacent smile of Couthon, when Lecointre demanded only that the oration should be printed? All seemed paralyzed. At length, Bourdon de l'Oise, whose name was doubly marked in the black list of the Dictator, stalked to the tribune, and moved the bold counter-resolution, that the speech should be referred to the two Committees whom that very speech accused. Still no applause from the conspirators: they sat torpid as frozen men. The shrinking Barrère, ever on the prudent side, looked round before he rose. He rises, and sides with Lecointre! Then Couthon seized the occasion, and from his seat (a privilege permitted alone to the paralytic philanthropist),* and with his melodious voice, sought to convert the crisis into a triumph. He demanded, not only that the harangue should be printed, but sent to all the communes and all the armies. It was necessary to soothe a wronged and ulcerated heart. Deputies, the most faithful, had been accused of shedding blood. "Ah, if *he* had contributed to the death of one innocent man, he should

* M. Thiers in his History, vol. iv. p. 79, makes a curious blunder: he says, "Couthon *s'elance à la* tribune." (Couthon darted towards the tribune.) Poor Couthon! whose half body was dead, and who was always wheeled in his chair into the Convention, and spoke sitting.

immolate himself with grief." Beautiful tenderness!—and while he spoke, he fondled the spaniel in his bosom. Bravo, Couthon! Robespierre triumphs! The reign of Terror shall endure! The old submission settles dove-like back in the assembly! They vote the printing of the Death-speech, and its transmission to all the municipalities. From the benches of the Mountain, Tallien, alarmed, dismayed, impatient, and indignant, cast his gaze where sat the strangers admitted to hear the debates. And, suddenly, he met the eyes of the Unknown who had brought to him the letter from Teresa de Fontenai, the preceding day. The eyes fascinated him as he gazed. In after-times, he often said, that their regard, fixed, earnest, half reproachful, and yet cheering and triumphant, filled him with new life and courage. They spoke to his heart as the trumpet speaks to the war-horse. He moved from his seat; he whispered with his allies; the spirit he had drawn in was contagious; the men whom Robespierre especially had denounced, and who saw the sword over their heads, woke from their torpid trance. Vadier, Cambon, Billaud-Varennes, Panis, Amar, rose at once—all at once demanded speech. Vadier is first heard, the rest succeed. It burst forth, the Mountain, with its fires and consuming lava! Flood upon flood they rush, a legion of Ciceros upon the startled Catiline! Robespierre falters—hesitates—would qualify, retract. They gather new courage from his new fears; they interrupt him; they drown his voice; they demand the reversal of the motion. Amar moves again that the speech be referred to the Committees—to the Committees—to his enemies! Confusion, and noise, and clamor! Robespierre wraps himself in silent and superb disdain. Pale, defeated, but not yet destroyed, he stands, a storm in the midst of storm!

The motion is carried. All men foresee in that defeat the Dictator's downfall. A solitary cry rose from the galleries; it was caught up; it circled through the hall—the audience: "*A bas le tyrant! Vive la république!*"*

CHAPTER XII.

"Auprès d'un corps aussi avili que la Convention il restait des chances pour que Robespierre sortit vainqueur de cette lutte."†—LACRETELLE, vol. xii.

As Robespierre left the hall, there was a dead and ominous silence in the crowd without. The herd, in every country,

* Down with the tyrant! Hurrah for the republic!

† Amongst a body so debased as the Convention, there still remained some chances that Robespierre would come off the victor in the struggle.

side with success; and the rats run from the falling tower. But Robespierre, who wanted courage, never wanted pride, and the last often supplied the place of the first: thoughtfully, and with an impenetrable brow, he passed through the throng, leaning on St. Just, Payan and his brother following him.

As they got into the open space, Robespierre abruptly broke the silence.

"How many heads were to fall upon the tenth?"

"Eighty," replied Payan.

"Ah, we must not tarry so long; a day may lose an empire; terrorism must serve us yet!"

He was silent a few moments, and his eyes roved suspiciously through the street.

"St. Just," he said abruptly, "they have not found this Englishman, whose revelations or whose trial would have crushed the Amars and the Talliens. No, no! My Jacobins themselves are growing dull and blind. But they have seized a woman—only a woman!"

"A woman's hand stabbed Marat," said St. Just. Robespierre stopped short, and breathed hard.

"St. Just," said he, "when this peril is past, we will found the Reign of Peace. There shall be homes and gardens set apart for the old. David is already designing the porticos. Virtuous men shall be appointed to instruct the young. All vice and disorder shall be *not* exterminated; no, no! only banished! We must not die yet. Posterity cannot judge us till our work is done. We have recalled *L'Etre Suprême;* we must now remodel this corrupted world. All shall be love and brotherhood; and—ho! Simon! Simon!—hold! Your pencil, St. Just!" And Robespierre wrote hastily. "This to Citizen President Dumas. Go with it quick, Simon. These eighty heads must fall *to-morrow—to-morrow*, Simon. Dumas will advance their trial a day. I will write to Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser. We meet at the Jacobins to-night, Simon; there, we will denounce the Convention itself; there we will rally round us the last friends of liberty and France."

A shout was heard in the distance behind: "*Vive la république!*"

The tyrant's eye shot a vindictive gleam. "The republic!—faugh! We did not destroy the throne of a thousand years for that *canaille!*"

The trial, the execution of the victims is advanced a day! By the aid of the mysterious intelligence that had guided and animated him hitherto, Zanoni learned that his arts had been

in vain. He knew that Viola was safe, if she could but survive an hour the life of the tyrant. He knew that Robespierre's hours were numbered; that the 10th of Thermidor, on which he had originally designed the execution of his last victims, would see himself at the scaffold. Zanoni had toiled, had schemed, for the fall of the Butcher and his reign. To what end? A single word from the tyrant had baffled the result of all. The execution of Viola is advanced a day. Vain seer, who wouldst make thyself the instrument of the Eternal, the very dangers that now beset the tyrant but expedite the doom of his victims! To-morrow, eighty heads, and hers whose pillow has been thy heart! To-morrow! and Maximilien is safe to-night!

CHAPTER XIII.

"Erde mag zurück in Erde stäuben,
Fliegt der Geist doch aus dem morschen Haus!
Seine Asche mag der Sturmwind treiben,
Sein Leben dauert ewig aus!" *—*Elegie.*

To-morrow!—and it is already twilight. One after one the gentle stars come smiling through the heaven. The Seine, in its slow waters, yet trembles with the last kiss of the rosy day; and still in the blue sky gleams the spire of Notre Dame; and still in the blue sky looms the guillotine by the *Barrière du Trône.* Turn to that time-worn building, once the church and the convent of the *Frères-Prêcheurs*, known by the then holy name of Jacobins; there the new Jacobins hold their club. There, in that oblong hall, once the library of the peaceful monks, assemble the idolators of Saint Robespierre. Two immense tribunes, raised at either end, contain the lees and dregs of the atrocious populace—the majority of that audience consisting of the furies of the guillotine (*furies de guillotine*). In the midst of the hall are the bureau and chair of the president—the chair long preserved by the piety of the monks as the relic of St. Thomas Aquinas! Above this seat scowls the harsh bust of Brutus. An iron lamp, and two branches, scatter over the vast room a murky, fuliginous ray, beneath the light of which the fierce faces of that Pandæmonium seem more grim and haggard. There, from the orator's tribune, shrieks the shrill wrath of Robespierre!

Meanwhile, all is chaos, disorder, half daring and half cowardice, in the Committee of his foes. Rumors fly from street

* Earth may crumble back into earth; the Spirit will still escape from its frail tenement. The wind of the storm may scatter his ashes; his being endures forever.

to street, from haunt to haunt, from house to house. The swallows flit low, and the cattle group together before the storm. And above this roar of the lives and things of the little hour, alone in his chamber stood he on whose starry youth—symbol of the imperishable bloom of the calm Ideal amidst the mouldering Actual—the clouds of ages had rolled in vain.

All those exertions which ordinary wit and courage could suggest had been tried in vain. All such exertions *were* in vain, where, in that Saturnalia of death, a life was the object. Nothing but the fall of Robespierre could have saved his victims; now, too late, that fall would only serve to avenge.

Once more in that last agony of excitement and despair, the Seer had plunged into solitude, to invoke again the aid or counsel of those mysterious intermediates between earth and heaven who had renounced the intercourse of the spirit when subjected to the common bondage of the mortal. In the intense desire and anguish of his heart, perhaps, lay a power not yet called forth; for who has not felt that the sharpness of extreme grief cuts and grides away many of those strongest bonds of infirmity and doubt which bind down the souls of men to the cabined darkness of the hour; and that from the cloud and thunderstorm often swoops the Olympian eagle that can ravish us aloft!

And the invocation was heard—the bondage of sense was rent away from the visual mind. He looked, and saw—no, not the being he had called, with its limbs of light and unutterably tranquil smile—not his familiar, Adon-Ai, the Son of Glory and the Star, but the Evil Omen, the dark Chimera, the implacable Foe, with exultation and malice burning in its hell-lit eyes. The Spectre, no longer cowering and retreating into shadow, rose before him, gigantic and erect; the face, whose veil no mortal hand had ever raised, was still concealed, but the form was more distinct, corporeal, and cast from it, as an atmosphere, horror, and rage, and awe. As an iceberg, the breath of that presence froze the air; as a cloud, it filled the chamber, and blackened the stars from heaven.

"Lo!" said Its voice, "I am here once more. Thou hast robbed me of a meaner prey. Now exorcise *thyself* from my power! Thy life has left thee, to live in the heart of a daughter of the charnel and the worm. In that life I come to thee with my inexorable tread. Thou art returned to the Threshold—thou, whose steps have trodden the verges of the Infinite! And, as the goblin of its phantasy seizes on a child in the dark,—mighty one, who wouldst conquer Death, I seize on thee!"

"Back to thy thraldom, slave! If thou art come to the voice that called thee not, it is again not to command, but to obey! Thou, from whose whisper I gained the boon of the lives lovelier and dearer than my own—thou—I command thee, not by spell and charm, but by the force of a soul mightier than the malice of thy being—thou serve me yet, and speak again the secret that can rescue the lives thou hast, by permission of the Universal Master, permitted me to retain awhile in the temple of the clay!"

Brighter and more devouringly burnt the glare from those lurid eyes; more visible and colossal yet rose the dilating shape; a yet fiercer and more disdainful hate spoke in the voice that answered: "Didst thou think that my boon would be other than thy curse? Happy for thee thou hadst mourned over the deaths which come by the gentle hand of Nature; hadst thou never known how the name of mother consecrates the face of Beauty, and never, bending over thy first-born, felt the imperishable sweetness of a father's love! They are saved, for what? The mother, for the death of violence and shame, and blood; for the doomsman's hand to put aside that shining hair which has entangled thy bridegroom kisses; the child, first and last of thine offspring, in whom thou didst hope to found a race that should hear with thee the music of celestial harps, and float, by the side of thy familiar, Adon-Ai, through the azure rivers of joy—the child, to live on a few days, as a fungus in a burial vault, a thing of the loathsome dungeon, dying of cruelty, and neglect, and famine. Ha! ha! thou who wouldst baffle death, learn how the deathless die if they dare to love the mortal. Now, Chaldæan, behold my boons! Now I seize and wrap thee with the pestilence of my presence; now, evermore, till thy long race is run, mine eyes shall glow into thy brain, and mine arms shall clasp thee, when thou wouldst take the wings of the Morning, and flee from the embrace of Night!"

"I tell thee, no! And again I compel thee, speak and answer to the lord who can command his slave. I know, though my lore fails me, and the reeds on which I leaned pierced my side, I know yet that it is written that the life of which I question can be saved from the headsman. Thou wrappest her future in the darkness of thy shadow, but thou canst not shape it. Thou mayst foreshow the antidote; thou canst not effect the bane. From thee I wring the secret, though it torture thee to name it. I approach thee; I look, dauntless, into thine eyes. The soul that loves can dare all things. Shadow, I defy thee, and compel!"

The spectre waned and recoiled. Like a vapor that lessens as the sun pierces and pervades it, the form shrunk cowering and dwarfed in the dimmer distance, and through the casement again rushed the stars.

"Yes," said the Voice, with a faint and hollow accent, "thou *canst* save her from the headsman; for it is written that sacrifice can save. Ha! ha!" And the shape again suddenly dilated into the gloom of its giant stature, and its ghastly laugh exulted, as if the Foe, a moment baffled, had regained its might. "Ha! ha!—thou canst save her life, if thou wilt sacrifice thine own! Is it for this thou hast lived on through crumbling empires and countless generations of thy race? At last shall Death reclaim thee? Wouldst thou save her?—*die for her!* Fall, O stately column, over which stars yet unformed may gleam—fall, that the herb at thy base may drink a few hours longer the sunlight and the dews! Silent! Art thou ready for the sacrifice? See, the moon moves up through Heaven. Beautiful and wise one, wilt thou bid her smile tomorrow on thy headless clay?"

"Back! for my soul, in answering thee from depths where thou canst not hear it, has regained its glory; and I hear the wings of Adon-Ai gliding musical through the air."

He spoke; and with a low shriek of baffled rage and hate, the Thing was gone, and through the room rushed, luminous and sudden, the Presence of silvery light.

As the Heavenly visitor stood in the atmosphere of his own lustre, and looked upon the face of the Theurgist with an aspect of ineffable tenderness and love, all space seemed lighted from his smile. Along the blue air without, from that chamber in which his wings had halted, to the farthest star in the azure distance, it seemed as if the track of his flight were visible, by a lengthened splendor in the air, like the column of moonlight on the sea. Like the flower that diffuses perfume as the very breath of its life, so the emanation of that presence was joy. Over the world, as a million times swifter than light, than electricity, the Son of Glory had sped his way to the side of love, his wings had scattered delight as the morning scatters dew. For that brief moment, Poverty had ceased to mourn, Disease fled from its prey, and Hope breathed a dream of Heaven into the darkness of Despair.

"Thou art right," said the melodious Voice. "Thy courage has restored thy power. Once more, in the haunts of earth, thy soul charms me to thy side. Wiser now, in the moment when thou comprehendest Death, than when thy unfettered

spirit learned the solemn mystery of Life; the human affections that thralled and humbled thee awhile bring to thee, in these last hours of thy mortality, the sublimest heritage of thy race—the eternity that commences from the grave."

"O Adon-Ai," said the Chaldæan, as, circumfused in the splendor of the visitant, a glory more radiant than human beauty settled round his form, and seemed already to belong to the eternity of which the Bright One spoke, "as men, before they die, see and comprehend the enigmas hidden from them before,* so in this hour, when the sacrifice of self to another brings the course of ages to its goal, I see the littleness of Life compared to the majesty of Death; but oh, Divine Consoler, even here, even in thy presence, the affections that inspire me sadden. To leave behind me in this bad world, unaided, unprotected, those for whom I die! The wife! the child!—Oh, speak comfort to me in this!"

"And what," said the visitor, with a slight accent of reproof in the tone of celestial pity; "What, with all thy wisdom and thy starry secrets, with all thy empire of the past, and thy visions of the future—what art thou to the All-Directing and Omniscient? Canst thou yet imagine that thy presence on earth can give to the hearts thou lovest the shelter which the humblest take from the wings of the Presence that lives in Heaven? Fear not thou for their future. Whether thou live or die, their future is the care of the Most High! In the dungeon and on the scaffold looks everlasting the Eye of HIM, tenderer than thou to love, wiser than thou to guide, mightier than thou to save!"

Zanoni bowed his head; and when he looked up again, the last shadow had left his brow. The visitor was gone; but still the glory of his presence seemed to shine upon the spot; still the solitary air seemed to murmur with tremulous delight. And thus ever shall it be with those who have, once, detaching themselves utterly from life, received the visit of the Angel FAITH. Solitude and space retain the splendor, and it settles like a halo round their graves.

* The greatest Poet, and one of the noblest thinkers, of the last age, said, on his death-bed, "Many things obscure to me before, now clear up and become visible."—See the *Life of Schiller*.

CHAPTER XIV.

" Dann zur Blumenflur der Sterne
Aufgeschauet liebewarm,
Fass' ihn freundlich Arm in Arm
Trag' ihn in die blaue Ferne." *

—UHLAND, *An den Tod.*

HE stood upon the lofty balcony that overlooked the quiet city. Though afar, the fiercest passions of men were at work on the web of strife and doom, all that gave itself to his view was calm and still in the rays of the summer moon, for his soul was wrapped from man and man's narrow sphere, and only the serener glories of creation were present to the vision of the seer. There he stood, alone and thoughtful, to take the last farewell of the wondrous life that he had known.

Coursing through the fields of space, he beheld the gossamer shapes, whose choral joys his spirit had so often shared. There, group upon group, they circled in the starry silence multiform in the unimaginable beauty of a being fed by ambrosial dews and serenest light. In his trance, all the universe stretched visible beyond; in the green valleys afar, he saw the dances of the fairies; in the bowels of the mountains, he beheld the race that breathe the lurid air of the volcanoes, and hide from the light of Heaven; on every leaf in the numberless forests, in every drop of the unmeasured seas, he surveyed its separate and swarming world; far up, in the farthest blue, he saw orb upon orb ripening into shape, and planets starting from the central fire, to run their day of ten thousand years For everywhere in creation is the breath of the Creator, and in every spot where the breath breathes is life! And alone, in the distance, the lonely man beheld his Magian brother. There, at work with his numbers and his cabala, amidst the wrecks of Rome, passionless and calm, sat in his cell the mystic Mejnour; living on, living ever while the world lasts, indifferent whether his knowledge produces weal or woe; a mechanical agent of a more tender and a wiser Will, that guides every spring to its inscrutable designs. Living on—living ever—as Science that cares alone for knowledge, and halts not to consider how knowledge advances happiness; how Human Improvement, rushing through civilization, crushes in its march all who can-

* Then towards the Garden of the Star
Lift up thine aspect warm with love,
And, friendlike link'd through space afar,
Mount with him, arm in arm, above.

—UHLAND, *Poem to* DEATH.

not grapple to its wheels ;* ever, with its cabala and its numbers, lives on to change, in its bloodless movements, the face of the habitable world !

And, "Oh, farewell to life!" murmured the glorious dreamer. "Sweet, O life, hast thou been to me! How fathomless thy joys—how rapturously has my soul bounded forth upon the upward paths! To him who forever renews his youth in the clear fount of Nature, how exquisite is the mere happiness *to be!* Farewell, ye lamps of heaven, and ye million tribes, the Populace of Air. Not a mote in the beam, not a herb on the mountain, not a pebble on the shore, not a seed far-blown into the wilderness, but contributed to the lore that sought in all, the true principle of life, the Beautiful, the Joyous, the Immortal. To others, a land, a city, a hearth, has been a home ; *my* home has been wherever the intellect could pierce, or the spirit could breathe the air."

He paused, and through the immeasurable space, his eyes and his heart, penetrating the dismal dungeon, rested on his child. He saw it slumbering in the arms of the pale mother, and *his* soul spoke to the sleeping soul. "Forgive me, if my desire was sin ; I dreamed to have reared and nurtured thee to the divinest destinies my visions could foresee. Betimes, as the mortal part was strengthened against disease, to have purified the spiritual from every sin ; to have led thee, heaven upon heaven, through the holy ecstasies which make up the existence of the orders that dwell on high ; to have formed, from thy sublime affections, the pure and ever-living communication between thy mother and myself. The dream was but a dream—it is no more ! In sight myself of the grave, I feel, at last, that through the portals of the grave lies the true initiation into the holy and the wise. Beyond those portals I await ye both, beloved pilgrims !"

From his numbers and his cabala, in his cell, amidst the wrecks of Rome, Mejnour, startled, looked up, and, through the spirit, felt that the spirit of his distant friend addressed him.

"Fare thee well forever upon this earth ! Thy last companion forsakes thy side. Thine age survives the youth of all ; and the Final Day shall find thee still the contemplater of our

* "You colonize the lands of the savage with the Anglo-Saxon ; you civilize that portion of *the earth ;* but is the *savage* civilized ? He is exterminated ! You accumulate machinery ; you increase the total of wealth : but what becomes of the labor you displace ? One generation is sacrificed to the next. You diffuse knowledge, and the world seems to grow brighter ; but Discontent at Poverty replaces Ignorance, happy with its crust. Every improvement, every advancement in civilization, injures some, to benefit others, and either cherishes the want of to-day, or prepares the revolution of to-morrow."—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

tombs. I go with my free-will into the land of darkness; but new suns and systems blaze around us from the grave. I go where the souls of those for whom I resign the clay shall be my co-mates through eternal youth. At last, I recognize the true ordeal and the real victory. Mejnour, cast down thy elixir; lay by thy load of years! Wherever the soul can wander, the Eternal Soul of all things protects it still!"

CHAPTER XV.

"Ils ne veulent plus perdre un moment d'une nuit si précieuse." *
—LACRETELLE, tom. xii.

It was late that night, and René-François Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, had re-entered his cabinet, on his return from the Jacobin club. With him were two men who might be said to represent, the one the moral, the other the physical force of the Reign of Terror: Fouquier-Tinville, the Public Accuser, and François Henriot, the General of the Parisian National Guard. This formidable triumvirate were assembled to debate on the proceedings of the next day; and the three sister-witches, over their hellish caldron, were scarcely animated by a more fiend-like spirit, or engaged in more execrable designs, than these three heroes of the Revolution in their premeditated massacre of the morrow.

Dumas was but little altered in appearance since, in the earlier part of this narrative, he was presented to the reader, except that his manner was somewhat more short and severe, and his eye yet more restless. But he seemed almost a superior being by the side of his associates. René-Dumas, born of respectable parents, and well-educated, despite his ferocity, was not without a certain refinement, which perhaps rendered him the more acceptable to the precise and formal Robespierre.† But Henriot had been a lackey, a thief, a spy of the police; he had drunk the blood of Madame de Lamballe, and had risen to his present rank for no quality but his ruffianism; and Fouquier-Tinville, the son of a provincial agriculturist, and afterwards a clerk at the Bureau of the Police, was little less base in his manners, and yet more, from a certain loathsome buffoonery, revolting in his speech; bull-headed, with black, sleek hair, with a narrow and livid forehead, with small eyes, that twinkled with a sinister malice; strongly and coarsely

* They would not lose another moment of so precious a night.

† Dumas was a Beau in his way. His gala dress was a *blood-red coat*, with the finest ruffles.

built, he looked what he was, the audacious Bully of a lawless and relentless Bar.

Dumas trimmed the candles, and bent over the list of the victims for the morrow.

"It is a long catalogue," said the President; "eighty trials for one day! And Robespierre's orders to despatch the whole *fournée* are unequivocal."

"Pooh!" said Fouquier, with a coarse, loud laugh; we must try them *en masse*. I know how to deal with our jury. '*Je pense, Citoyens, que vous êtes convaincus du crime des accusés?*' * Ha! ha!—the longer the list, the shorter the work."

"Oh, yes," growled out Henriot, with an oath—as usual, half drunk, and lolling on his chair, with his spurred heels on the table—"little Tinville is the man for despatch."

"Citizen Henriot," said Dumas gravely, "permit me to request thee to select another footstool; and for the rest, let me warn thee that to-morrow is a critical and important day; one that will decide the fate of France."

"A fig for little France! *Vive le Vertueux Robespierre, la Colonne de la République!* † Plague on this talking; it is dry work. Hast thou no *eau de vie* in that little cupboard?"

Dumas and Fouquier exchanged looks of disgust. Dumas shrugged his shoulders, and replied:

"It is to guard thee against *eau de vie*, Citizen General Henriot, that I have requested thee to meet me here. Listen, if thou canst!"

"Oh, talk away! Thy *métier* is to talk, mine to fight and to drink."

"To-morrow, I tell thee then, the populace will be abroad; all factions will be astir. It is probable enough that they will even seek to arrest our tumbrils on their way to the guillotine. Have thy men armed and ready; keep the streets clear; cut down without mercy whomsoever may obstruct the ways."

"I understand"; said Henriot, striking his sword so loudly that Dumas half started at the clank; "Black Henriot is no '*Indulgent.*'"

"Look to it, then, Citizen—look to it! And hark thee," he added, with a grave and sombre brow, "if thou wouldst keep thine own head on thy shoulders, beware of the *eau de vie*."

"My own head!—*sacre mille tonnerres!* Dost thou threaten the General of the Parisian army?"

Dumas, like Robespierre, a precise, atrabilious, and arrogant

* I think, citizens, that you are convinced of the crime of the accused.

† Long life to the virtuous Robespierre, the pillar of the Republic.

man, was about to retort, when the craftier Tinville laid his hand on his arm, and, turning to the General, said: "My dear Henriot, thy dauntless republicanism, which is too ready to give offence, must learn to take a reprimand from the representative of Republican Law. Seriously, *mon cher*, thou must be sober for the next three or four days; after the crisis is over, thou and I will drink a bottle together. Come, Dumas, relax thine austerity, and shake hands with our friend. No quarrels amongst ourselves!"

Dumas hesitated, and extended his hand, which the ruffian clasped; and, maudlin tears succeeding his ferocity, he half sobbed, half hiccuped forth his protestations of civism and his promises of sobriety.

"Well, we depend on thee, *mon Général*," said Dumas; "and now, since we shall all have need of vigor for to-morrow, go home and sleep soundly."

"Yes, I forgive thee, Dumas—I forgive thee. I am not vindictive—I! but still, if a man threatens me—if a man insults me—" And, with the quick changes of intoxication, again his eyes gleamed fire through their foul tears. With some difficulty, Fouquier succeeded at last in soothing the brute, and leading him from the chamber. But still, as some wild beast disappointed of a prey, he growled and snarled, as his heavy tread descended the stairs. A tall trooper, mounted, was leading Henriot's horse to and fro the streets; and as the General waited at the porch till his attendant turned, a stranger stationed by the wall accosted him:

"General Henriot, I have desired to speak with thee. Next to Robespierre, thou art, or shouldst be, the most powerful man in France."

"Hem! Yes, I ought to be. What then? Every man has not his deserts!"

"Hist!" said the stranger, "thy pay is scarcely suitable to thy rank and thy wants."

"That is true."

"Even in a revolution, a man takes care of his fortunes!"

"*Diable!* speak out, Citizen."

"I have a thousand pieces of gold with me; they are thine if thou wilt grant me one small favor."

"Citizen, I grant it!" said Henriot, waving his hand majestically. "Is it to denounce some rascal who has offended thee?"

"No; it is simply this: write these words to President Dumas: 'Admit the bearer to thy presence; and if thou canst grant him the request he will make to thee, it will be an

inestimable obligation to François Henriot.'" The stranger, as he spoke, placed pencil and tablets in the shaking hands of the soldier.

"And where is the gold?"

"Here."

With some difficulty, Henriot scrawled the words dictated to him, clutched the gold, mounted his horse, and was gone.

Meanwhile Fouquier, when he had closed the door upon Henriot, said sharply: "How canst thou be so mad as to incense that brigand? Knowest thou not that our laws are nothing without the physical force of the National Guard, and that he is their leader?"

"I know this, that Robespierre must have been mad to place that drunkard at their head; and mark my words, Fouquier, if the struggle come, it is that man's incapacity and cowardice that will destroy us. Yes, thou mayst live thyself to accuse thy beloved Robespierre, and to perish in his fall."

"For all that, we must keep well with Henriot till we can find the occasion to seize and behead him. To be safe, we must fawn on those who are still in power; and fawn the more, the more we would depose them. Do not think this Henriot, when he wakes to-morrow, will forget thy threats. He is the most revengeful of human beings. Thou must send, and soothe him in the morning!"

"Right," said Dumas, convinced. "I was too hasty; and now I think we have nothing further to do, since we have arranged to make short work with our *journée* of to-morrow. I see in the list a knave I have long marked out, though his crime once procured me a legacy—Nicot, the Hébertist."

"And young André Chenier, the Poet? Ah, I forgot; we beheaded *him* to-day! Revolutionary virtue is at its acmé. His own brother abandoned him!"*

"There is a foreigner—an Italian woman—in the list; but I can find no charge made out against her."

"All the same; we must execute her for the sake of the round number; eighty sounds better than seventy-nine!"

Here a *huissier* brought a paper, on which was written the request of Henriot.

"Ah, this is fortunate," said Tinville, to whom Dumas

* His brother is said, indeed, to have contributed to the condemnation of this virtuous and illustrious person. He was heard to cry aloud—"Si mon frère est coupable, qu'il perisse." (If my brother be culpable, let him die.) This brother, Marie-Joseph, also a poet, and the author of "Charles IX.," so celebrated in the earlier days of the Revolution, enjoyed, of course, according to the wonted justice of the world, a triumphant career; and was proclaimed in the Champ de Mars, "le premier des poëtes Français," a title due to his murdered brother.

chucked the scroll; "grant the prayer by all means; so at least that it does not lessen our bead-roll. But I will do Henriot the justice to say, that he never asks to let off, but to put on. Good-night! I am worn out; my escort waits below. Only on such an occasion would I venture forth in the streets at night." * And Fouquier, with a long yawn, quitted the room.

"Admit the bearer!" said Dumas, who, withered and dried, as lawyers in practice mostly are, seemed to require as little sleep as his parchments.

The stranger entered.

"Réné-François Dumas," said he, seating himself opposite to the President; and markedly adopting the plural, as if in contempt of the revolutionary jargon; "amidst the excitement and occupations of your later life, I know not if you can remember that we have met before?"

The judge scanned the features of his visitor, and a pale blush settled on his sallow cheeks: "Yes, Citizen, I remember!"

"And you recall the words I then uttered! You spoke tenderly and philanthropically of your horror of capital executions; you exulted in the approaching Revolution as the termination of all sanguinary punishments; you quoted reverently the saying of Maximilien Robespierre, the rising statesman, 'the executioner is the invention of the tyrant'; and I replied that while you spoke, a foreboding seized me that we should meet again when your ideas of death and the philosophy of revolutions might be changed! Was I right, Citizen Réné-François Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal?"

"Pooh!" said Dumas, with some confusion on his brazen brow, "I spoke then as men speak who have not acted. Revolutions are not made with rose-water! But truce to the gossip of the long-ago. I remember, also, that thou didst then save the life of my relation, and it will please thee to learn that his intended murderer will be guillotined to-morrow."

"That concerns yourself—your justice or your revenge. Permit me the egotism to remind you, that you then promised that if ever a day should come when you could serve me, your life—yes, the phrase was, 'your heart's blood'—was at my bidding. Think not, austere judge, that I come to ask a boon that can affect yourself; I come but to ask a day's respite for another!"

"Citizen, it is impossible! I have the order of Robespierre that not one less than the total on my list must undergo their

† During the latter part of the Reign of Terror, Fouquier rarely stirred out at night, and never without an escort. In the Reign of Terror, those most terrified were its kings.

trial for to-morrow. As for the verdict, that rests with the jury!"

"I do not ask you to diminish the catalogue. Listen still! In your death-roll there is the name of an Italian woman, whose youth, whose beauty, and whose freedom, not only from every crime, but every tangible charge, will excite only compassion, and not terror. Even *you* would tremble to pronounce her sentence. It will be dangerous on a day when the populace will be excited, when your tumbrils may be arrested, to expose youth and innocence and beauty to the pity and courage of a revolted crowd."

Dumas looked up, and shrunk from the eye of the stranger.

"I do not deny, Citizen, that there is reason in what thou urgest. But my orders are positive."

"Positive only as to the number of the victims. I offer you a substitute for this one. I offer you the head of a man who knows all of the very conspiracy which now threatens Robespierre and yourself; and compared with one clue to which, you would think even eighty ordinary lives a cheap purchase."

"That alters the case," said Dumas eagerly; "if thou canst do this, on my own responsibility I will postpone the trial of the Italian. Now name the proxy!"

"You behold him!"

"Thou!" exclaimed Dumas, while a fear he could not conceal betrayed itself through his surprise. "Thou!—and thou comest to me alone at night, to offer thyself to justice. Ha!—this is a snare. Tremble, fool! Thou art in my power, and I can have *both!*"

"You can," said the stranger, with a calm smile of disdain; "but my life is valueless without my revelations. Sit still, I command you,—hear me!" and the light in those dauntless eyes spellbound and awed the judge. "You will remove me to the Conciergerie; you will fix my trial, under the name of Zanoni, amidst your *fournée* of to-morrow. If I do not satisfy you by my speech, you hold the woman I die to save as your hostage. It is but the reprieve for her of a single day that I demand. The day following the morrow, I shall be dust, and you may wreak your vengeance on the life that remains. Tush! Judge and condemner of thousands, do you hesitate? Do you imagine that the man who voluntarily offers himslf to death, will be daunted into uttering one syllable at your bar against his will? Have you not had experience enough of the inflexibility of pride and courage? President, I place before you the ink and implements! Write to the gaoler a reprieve of one

day for the woman whose life can avail you nothing, and I will bear the order to my own prison—I, who can now tell this much as an earnest of what I can communicate—while I speak, your own name, Judge, is in a list of death. I can tell you by whose hand it is written down; I can tell you in what quarter to look for danger; I can tell you from what cloud, in this lurid atmosphere, hangs the storm that shall burst on Robespierre and his reign!"

Dumas grew pale; and his eyes vainly sought to escape the magnetic gaze that overpowered and mastered him. Mechanically, and as if under an agency not his own, he wrote while the stranger dictated.

"Well," he said, then, forcing a smile to his lips; "I promised I would serve you; see, I am faithful to my word. I suppose that you are one of those fools of feeling—those professors of anti-revolutionary virtue, of whom I have seen not a few before my bar. Faugh! it sickens me to see those who make a merit of incivism, and perish to save some bad patriot, because it is a son, or a father, or a wife, or a daughter, who is saved."

"I *am* one of those fools of feeling," said the stranger, rising. "You have divined aright."

"And wilt thou not, in return for my mercy, utter to-night the revelations thou wouldst proclaim to-morrow? Come; and, perhaps, thou too—nay, the woman also—may receive not reprieve, but pardon."

"Before your tribunal, and there alone! Nor will I deceive you, President. My information may avail you not; and even while I show the cloud, the bolt may fall."

"Tush! Prophet, look to thyself! Go, madman; go. I know, too well, the contumacious obstinacy of the class to which I suspect thou belongest to waste further words. *Diable!* but ye grow so accustomed to look on death, that ye forget the respect ye owe to it. Since thou offerest me thy head, I accept it. To-morrow, thou mayst repent; it will be too late."

"Ay, too late, President!" echoed the calm visitor.

"But, remember, it is not pardon, it is but a day's reprieve, I have promised to this woman. According as thou dost satisfy me to-morrow, she lives or dies. I am frank, citizen; thy ghost shall not haunt me for want of faith."

"It is but a day that I have asked; the rest I leave to justice and to Heaven. Your *huissiers* wait below."

CHAPTER XVI.

"Und den Mordstahl seh' ich blinken ;
Und das Morderauge gluhn ! "*

—*Kassandra.*

VIOLA was in the prison, that opened not but for those already condemned before adjudged. Since her exile from Zanoni, her very intellect had seemed paralyzed. All that beautiful exuberance of fancy, which, if not the fruit of genius, seemed its blossoms : all that gush of exquisite thought, which Zanoni had justly told her flowed with mysteries and subtleties ever new to him, the wise one,—all were gone, annihilated ; the blossom withered, the fount dried up. From something almost above womanhood, she seemed listlessly to sink into something below childhood. With the inspirer the inspirations had ceased ; and, in deserting love, genius also was left behind.

She scarcely comprehended why she had been thus torn from her home and the mechanism of her dull tasks. She scarcely knew what meant those kindly groups, that, struck with her exceeding loveliness, had gathered round her in the prison, with mournful looks, but with words of comfort. She, who had hitherto been taught to abhor those whom Law condemns for crime, was amazed to hear that beings thus compassionate and tender, with cloudless and lofty brows, with gallant and gentle mien, were criminals, for whom Law had no punishment short of death. But they, the savages, gaunt and menacing, who had dragged her from her home, who had attempted to snatch from her the infant, while she clasped it in her arms, and laughed fierce scorn at her mute quivering lips—THEY were the chosen citizens, the men of virtue, the favorites of Power, the ministers of Law ! Such thy black caprices, O thou, the ever-shifting and calumnious—Human Judgment !

A squalid, and yet a gay world, did the prison houses of that day present. There, as in the sepulchre to which they led, all ranks were cast, with an even-handed scorn. And yet there, the reverence that comes from great emotions restored Nature's first and imperishable, and most lovely, and most noble Law—THE INEQUALITY BETWEEN MAN AND MAN ! There, place was given by the prisoners, whether royalists or *sans-culottes*, to Age, to Learning, to Renown, to Beauty ; and Strength, with its own inborn chivalry, raised into rank the helpless and the weak. The iron sinews and the Herculean shoulders made

* And I see the steel of Murder glitter,
And the eye of Murder glow.

way for the woman and the child ; and the graces of Humanity, lost elsewhere, sought their refuge in the abode of Terror.

"And wherefore, my child, do they bring thee hither?" asked an old gray-haired priest.

"I cannot guess."

"Ah, if you know not your offence, fear the worst."

"And, my child?" (for the infant was still suffered to rest upon her bosom).

"Alas, young mother! they will suffer thy child to live."

"And for this—an orphan in the dungeon!" murmured the accusing heart of Viola, "have I reserved his offspring! Zanoni, even in thought, ask not—ask not, what I have done with the child I bore thee!"

Night came ; the crowd rushed to the grate, to hear the muster-roll.* Her name was with the doomed. And the old priest, better prepared to die, but reserved from the death-list, laid his hands on her head, and blessed her while he wept. She heard, and wondered ; but she did not weep. With downcast eyes, with arms folded on her bosom, she bent submissively to the call. But now, another name was uttered ; and a man, who had pushed rudely past her, to gaze or to listen, shrieked out a howl of despair and rage. She turned, and their eyes met. Through the distance of time, she recognized that hideous aspect. Nicot's face settled back into its devilish sneer. "At least, gentle Neapolitan, the Guillotine will unite us. Oh, we shall sleep well our wedding night!" And, with a laugh, he strode away through the crowd, and vanished into his lair.

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She was placed in her gloomy cell, to await the morrow. But the child was still spared her ; and she thought it seemed as if conscious of the awful Present. In their way to the prison it had not moaned or wept ; it had looked with its clear eyes, unshrinking, on the gleaming pikes and savage brows of the *huissiers*. And now, alone in the dungeon, it put its arms round her neck, and murmured its indistinct sounds, low and sweet as some unknown language of consolation and of Heaven. And of Heaven it was! For, at the murmur, the terror melted from her soul: upward, from the dungeon and the death—upward, where the happy cherubim chaunt the mercy of the All-loving, whispered that cherub's voice. She fell upon her knees, and prayed. The despoilers of all that beautifies and hallows life had desecrated the altar, and denied the God! They had removed from the last hour of their victims the

* Called in the mocking jargon of the day, "Evening Gazette."

Priest, the Scripture, and the Cross! But Faith builds in the dungeon and the lazar-house its sublimest shrines; and up, through roofs of stone, that shut out the eye of Heaven, ascends the ladder where the angels glide to and fro—PRAYER.

And there, in the very cell beside her own, the atheist, Nicot, sits stolid amidst the darkness, and hugs the thought of Danton, that death is nothingness.* His, no spectacle of an appalled and perturbed conscience! Remorse is the echo of a lost virtue, and virtue he never knew. Had he to live again, he would live the same. But more terrible than the deathbed of a believing and despairing sinner, that blank gloom of apathy, that contemplation of the worm and the rat of the charnel-house, that grim and loathsome NOTHINGNESS which, for his eye, falls like a pall over the universe of life. Still, staring into space, gnawing his livid lip, he looks upon the darkness, convinced that darkness is forever and forever!

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Place, there! place! Room yet in your crowded cells. Another has come to the slaughter-house.

As the gaoler, lamp in hand, ushered in the stranger, the latter touched him, and whispered. The stranger drew a jewel from his finger. *Diantre*, how the diamond flashed in the ray of the lamp! Value each head of your eighty at a thousand francs, and the jewel is more worth than all! The gaoler paused, and the diamond laughed in his dazzled eyes. O thou Cerberus, thou hast mastered all else that seems human in that fell employ. Thou hast no pity, no love, and no remorse. But Avarice survives the rest, and the foul heart's master-serpent swallows up the tribe. Ha! ha! Crafty stranger, thou hast conquered! They tread the gloomy corridor; they arrive at the door where the gaoler has placed the fatal mark, now to be erased, for the prisoner within is to be reprieved a day. The key grates in the lock—the door yawns—the stranger takes the lamp and enters.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH AND LAST.

"Cosi vince Goffredo!" †
—*Ger. Lib.*, cant. xx.—xliv.

AND Viola was in prayer. She heard not the opening of the door; she saw not the dark shadow that fell along the

* "Ma demeure sera bientôt LE NÉANT" (My abode will soon be Nothingness), said Danton before his judges.

† Thus conquered Godfrey.

floor. *His* power, *his* arts were gone ; but the mystery and the spell known to *her* simple heart did not desert her in the hours of trial and despair. When Science falls as a firework from the sky it would invade ; when Genius withers as a flower in the breath of the icy charnel, the Hope of a child-like soul wraps the air in light, and the innocence of unquestioning Belief covers the grave with blossoms.

In the farthest corner of the cell she knelt ; and the infant, as if to imitate what it could not comprehend, bent its little limbs, and bowed its smiling face, and knelt with her also, by her side.

He stood, and gazed upon them as the light of the lamp fell calmly on their forms. It fell over those clouds of golden hair, dishevelled, parted, thrown back from the rapt, candid brow ; the dark eyes raised on high, where, through the human tears, a light as from above was mirrored ; the hands clasped, the lips apart, the form all animate and holy with the sad serenity of innocence and the touching humility of woman. And he heard her voice, though it scarcely left her lips—the low voice that the heart speaks—loud enough for God to hear !

"And if never more to see him, O Father, canst thou not make the love that will not die, minister, even beyond the grave, to his earthly fate ? Canst thou not yet permit it, as a living spirit, to hover over him—a spirit fairer than all his science can conjure ? Oh, whatever lot be ordained to either, grant—even though a thousand ages may roll between us—grant, when at last, purified and regenerate, and fitted for the transport of such reunion—grant that we may meet once more ! And for his child—it kneels to thee from the dungeon floor ! To-morrow, and whose breast shall cradle it ! Whose hand shall feed ! Whose lips shall pray for its weal below and its soul hereafter !" She paused, her voice choked with sobs.

"Thou, Viola ! Thou, thyself. He whom thou hast deserted is here to preserve the mother to the child !"

She started ! Those accents, tremulous as her own ! She started to her feet ! He was there—in all the pride of his unwaning youth and superhuman beauty ! There, in the house of dread, and in the hour of travail ! There, image and personation of the love that can pierce the Valley of the Shadow, and can glide, the unscathed wanderer from the heaven, through the roaring abyss of hell.

With a cry, never, perhaps, heard before in that gloomy

vault—a cry of delight and rapture, she sprang forward, and fell at his feet.

He bent down to raise her, but she slid from his arms. He called her by the familiar epithets of the old endearment, and she only answered him by sobs. Wildly, passionately, she kissed his hands, the hem of his garment, but voice was gone.

"Look up, look up! I am here—I am here to save thee! Wilt thou deny to me thy sweet face? Truant, wouldst thou fly me still?"

"Fly thee!" she said, at last, and in a broken voice; "oh, if my thoughts wronged thee; oh, if my dream, that awful dream, deceived—kneel down with me, and pray for our child!" Then, springing to her feet with a sudden impulse, she caught up the infant, and placing it in his arms, sobbed forth, with deprecating and humble tones: "Not for my sake—not for mine, did I abandon thee, but—"

"Hush!" said Zanoni: "I know all the thoughts that thy confused and struggling senses can scarcely analyze themselves. And see how, with a look, thy child answers them!"

And in truth the face of that strange infant seemed radiant with its silent and unfathomable joy. It seemed as if it recognized the father; it clung—it forced itself to his breast, and there, nestling, turned its bright, clear eyes upon Viola, and smiled.

"Pray for my child!" said Zanoni mournfully. "The thoughts of souls that would aspire as mine, are *all prayer!*" And, seating himself by her side, he began to reveal to her some of the holier secrets of his lofty being. He spoke of the sublime and intense faith from which alone the diviner knowledge can arise—the faith which, seeing the immortal everywhere, purifies and exalts the mortal that beholds—the glorious ambition that dwells not in the cabals and crimes of earth, but amidst those solemn wonders that speak not of men, but of God; of that power to abstract the soul from the clay which gives to the eye of the soul its subtle vision, and to the soul's wing the unlimited realm; of that pure, severe, and daring initiation, from which the mind emerges, as from death, into clear perceptions of its kindred with the Father-Principles of life and light, so that, in its own sense of the Beautiful, it finds its joy! In the serenity of its will, its power; in its sympathy with the youthfulness of the Infinite Creation, of which itself is an essence and a part, the secrets that embalm the very clay which they consecrate, and renew the strength of life with the ambrosia of mysterious and celestial sleep. And while he

spoke, Viola listened, breathless. If she could not comprehend, she no longer dared to distrust. She felt that in that enthusiasm, self-deceiving or not, no fiend could lurk ; and by an intuition, rather that an effort of the reason, she saw before her, like a starry ocean, the depth and mysterious beauty of the soul which her fears had wronged. Yet, when he said (concluding his strange confession), that to this life *within* life and *above* life, he had dreamed to raise her own, the fear of humanity crept over her, and he read in her silence how vain, with all his science, would the dream have been.

But now, as he closed, and, leaning on his breast, she felt the clasp of his protecting arm ; when, in one holy kiss, the past was forgiven and the present lost, then there returned to her the sweet and warm hopes of the natural life—of the loving woman. He was come to save her ! She asked not how, she believed it without a question. They should be at last again united. They would fly far from those scenes of violence and blood. Their happy Ionian isle, their fearless solitudes, would once more receive them. She laughed, with a child's joy, as this picture rose up amidst the gloom of the dungeon ! Her mind, faithful to its sweet, simple instincts, refused to receive the lofty images that flitted confusedly by it, and settled back to its human visions, yet more baseless, of the earthly happiness and the tranquil home.

"Talk not now to me, beloved—talk not more now to me of the past ! Thou art here ; thou wilt save me ; we shall live yet the common happy life ; that life with thee is happiness and glory enough to me. Traverse, if thou wilt, in thy pride of soul, the universe ; thy heart again is the universe to mine. I thought but now that I was prepared to die ; I see thee, touch thee, and again I know how beautiful a thing is life ! See through the grate the stars are fading from the sky ; the morrow will soon be here—THE MORROW which will open the prison doors ! Thou sayest thou canst save me—I will not doubt it now. Oh, let us dwell no more in cities ! I never doubted thee in our lovely isle ; no dreams haunted me there, except dreams of joy and beauty ; and thine eyes made yet more beautiful and joyous the world in waking. To-morrow !—why do you not smile ? To-morrow, love ! Is not *to-morrow* a blessed word ! Cruel ! you would punish me still, that you will not share my joy. Aha ! see our little one, how it laughs to my eyes ! I will talk to *that.* Child, thy father is come back !"

And taking the infant in her arms, and seating herself at a

little distance, she rocked it to and fro on her bosom, and prattled to it, and kissed it between every word ; and laughed and wept by fits, as ever and anon she cast over her shoulder her playful, mirthful glance upon the father to whom those fading stars smiled sadly their last farewell. How beautiful she seemed as she thus sat, unconscious of the future ! Still half a child herself, her child laughing to her laughter—two soft triflers on the brink of the grave ! Over her throat as she bent, fell, like a golden cloud, her redundant hair ; it covered her treasure like a veil of light ; and the child's little hands put it aside from time to time, to smile through the parted tresses, and then to cover its face and peep and smile again. It were cruel to damp that joy, more cruel still to share it.

"Viola," said Zanoni, at last, "dost thou remember that, seated by the cave on the moonlit beach, in our bridal isle, thou once didst ask me for this amulet?—the charm of a superstition long vanished from the world, with the creed to which it belonged. It is the last relic of my native land, and my mother, on her death-bed, placed it round my neck. I told thee then I would give it thee on that day *when the laws of our being should become the same.*"

"I remember it well."

"To-morrow it shall be thine !"

"Ah, that dear to-morrow !" And, gently laying down her child, for it slept now, she threw herself on his breast, and pointed to the dawn that began grayly to creep along the skies.

There, in those horror-breathing walls, the day-star looked through the dismal bars upon those three beings, in whom were concentered whatever is most tender in human ties ; whatever is most mysterious in the combinations of the human mind ; the sleeping Innocence ; the trustful Affection, that, contented with a touch, a breath, can foresee no sorrow ; the weary Science that, traversing all the secrets of creation, comes at last to Death for their solution, and still clings, as it nears the threshold, to the breast of Love. Thus, within, *the within*—a dungeon ; without, *the without*—stately with marts and halls, with palaces and temples—Revenge and Terror, at their dark schemes and counter-schemes—to and fro, upon the tide of the shifting passions, reeled the destinies of men and nations ; and hard at hand that day-star, waning into space, looked with impartial eye on the church tower and the guillotine. Up springs the blithesome morn. In yon gardens the birds renew their familiar song. The fishes are sporting through the freshening waters of the Seine. The gladness of divine nature,

the roar and dissonance of mortal life awake again ; the trader unbars his windows, the flower-girls troop gayly to their haunts, busy feet are tramping to the daily drudgeries that revolutions which strike down kings and kaisars leave the same Cain's heritage to the boor ; the wagons groan and reel to the mart ; Tyranny, up betimes, holds its pallid levee ; Conspiracy, that hath not slept, hears the clock, and whispers to its own heart, "The hour draws near." A group gather, eager-eyed, round the purlieus of the Convention Hall ; to-day decides the sovereignty of France—about the courts of the Tribunal their customary hum and stir. No matter what the hazard of the die, or who the ruler, this day eighty heads shall fall!

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And she slept so sweetly. Wearied out with joy, secure in the presence of the eyes regained, she had laughed and wept herself to sleep ; and still, in that slumber, there seemed a happy consciousness that the Loved was by—the Lost was found. For she smiled and murmured to herself, and breathed his name often, and stretched out her arms, and sighed if they touched him not. He gazed upon her as he stood apart—with what emotions it were vain to say. She would wake no more to him ; she could not know how dearly the safety of that sleep was purchased. That morrow she had so yearned for, it had come at last. *How would she greet the eve?* Amidst all the exquisite hopes with which love and youth contemplate the future, her eyes had closed. Those hopes still lent their iris-colors to her dreams. She would wake to live! To-morrow, and the Reign of Terror was no more ; the prison gates would be opened, she would go forth, with their child, into that summer-world of light. And *he?* He turned, and his eye fell upon the child, it was broad awake, and that clear, serious, thoughtful look which it mostly wore watched him with a solemn steadiness. He bent over and kissed its lips.

"Never more," he murmured, "O heritor of love and grief—never more wilt thou see me in thy visions ; never more will the light of those eyes be fed by celestial commune ; never more can my soul guard from thy pillow the trouble and the disease. Not such as I would have vainly shaped it must be thy lot. In common with thy race, it must be thine to suffer, to struggle, and to err. But mild be thy human trials, and strong be thy spirit, to love and to believe! And thus, as I gaze upon thee—thus may my nature breathe into thine its last and most intense desire ; may my love for thy mother pass to thee, and in thy looks may she hear my spirit comfort and

console her. Hark! they come! Yes! I await ye both beyond the grave!"

The door slowly opened; the gaoler appeared, and through the aperture rushed, at the same instant, a ray of sunlight; it streamed over the fair, hushed face of the happy sleeper; it played like a smile upon the lips of the child, that still, mute and steadfast, watched the movements of its father. At that moment Viola muttered in her sleep: "The day is come—the gates are open! Give me thy hand; we will go forth! To sea—to sea! How the sunshine plays upon the waters! To home, beloved one! to home again."

"Citizen, thine hour is come!"

"Hist!—she sleeps! A moment! There! it is done, thank Heaven—and *still* she sleeps!" He would not kiss lest he should awaken her, but gently placed round her neck the amulet that would speak to her, hereafter, the farewell; and promise, in that farewell, re-union! He is at the threshold; he turns again, and again. The door closes! He is gone forever.

She woke at last; she gazed round. "Zanoni, it is day!" No answer but the low wail of her child. Merciful Heaven, was it then all a dream? She tossed back the long tresses that must veil her sight; she felt the amulet on her bosom—it was *no* dream! "Oh, God! and he is gone!" She sprang to the door; she shrieked aloud. The gaoler comes! "My husband, my child's father?"

"He is gone before thee, woman!"

"Whither? Speak—speak!"

"To the guillotine!" and the black door closed again.

It closed upon the Senseless! As a lightning flash, Zanoni's words, his sadness, the true meaning of his mystic gift, the very sacrifice he made for her, all became distinct for a moment to her mind—and then darkness swept on it like a storm, yet darkness which had its light. And while she sat there, mute, rigid, voiceless, as congealed to stone, A VISION, like a wind, glided over the deeps within! The grim court—the judge—the jury—the accuser; and amidst the victims, the one dauntless and radiant form.

"Thou knowest the danger to the State—confess!"

"I know; and I keep my promise. Judge, I reveal thy doom! I know that the Anarchy thou callest a State expires with the setting of this sun. Hark! to the tramp without! Hark! to the roar of voices! Room there, ye Dead! Room in hell for Robespierre and his crew!"

They hurry into the court—the hasty and pale messengers;

there is confusion, and fear, and dismay! "Off with the conspirator! And to-morrow the woman thou wouldst have saved shall die!"

"To-morrow, President, the steel falls on THEE!"

On, through the crowded and roaring streets, on moves the Procession of Death. Ha, brave people! thou art aroused at last. They shall not die! Death is dethroned! Robespierre has fallen! They rush to the rescue! Hideous in the tumbril, by the side of Zanoni, raved and gesticulated that form which, in his prophetic dreams, he had seen his companion at the place of death. "Save us! Save us!" howled the atheist, Nicot! "On, brave populace! we *shall* be saved!" And through the crowd, her dark hair streaming wild, her eyes flashing fire, pressed a female form: "My Clarence!" she shrieked, in the soft southern language, native to the ears of Viola; "Butcher, what hast thou done with Clarence?" Her eyes roved over the eager faces of the prisoners; she saw not the one she sought. "Thank Heaven! Thank Heaven! I am not thy murderess?"

Nearer and nearer press the populace—another moment, and the deathsman is defrauded. O Zanoni! why still upon *thy* brow the resignation, that speaks no hope? Tramp! tramp! through the streets, dash the armed troop: faithful to his orders, black Henriot leads them on. Tramp! tramp! over the craven and scattered crowd! Here, flying in disorder; there, trampled in the mire, the shrieking rescuers! And amidst them, stricken by the sabres of the guard, her long hair blood-bedabbled, lies the Italian woman; and still upon her writhing lips sits joy, as they murmur: "Clarence! I have not destroyed thee!"

On to the *Barrière du Trône*. It frowns dark in the air—the giant instrument of murder! One after one to the *glaive;* another and another and another! Mercy! O mercy! Is the bridge between the sun and the shades so brief?—brief as a sigh? There, there—*his* turn has come. "Die not yet; leave me not behind. Hear me—hear me!" shrieked the inspired sleeper. "What! and thou smilest still!" They smiled—those pale lips—and *with* the smile, the place of doom, the headsman, the horror vanished! With that smile, all space seemed suffused in eternal sunshine. Up from the earth he rose—he hovered over her—a thing not of matter—an IDEA of joy and light! Behind, Heaven opened, deep after deep; and the Hosts of Beauty were seen, rank upon rank, afar; and "Welcome," in a myriad melodies, broke from your choral

multitude, ye People of the Skies—"Welcome! O purified by sacrifice, and immortal only through the grave—this it is to die." And radiant amidst the radiant, the IMAGE stretched forth its arms, and murmured to the sleeper: "Companion of Eternity,—*this* it is to die!"

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"Ho! wherefore do they make us signs from the house-tops? Wherefore gather the crowds through the street? Why sounds the bell? Why shrieks the tocsin? Hark to the guns! The armed clash! Fellow-captives, is there hope for us at last?"

So gasp out the prisoners, each to each. Day wanes, evening closes; still they press their white faces to the bars; and still from window, and from house-top, they see the smiles of friends—the waving signals! "Hurrah!" at last. "Hurrah! Robespierre is fallen! The Reign of Terror is no more! God hath permitted us to live!"

Yes; cast thine eyes into the hall, where the tyrant and his conclave hearkened to the roar without! Fulfilling the prophecy of Dumas, Henriot, drunk with blood and alcohol, reels within, and chucks his gory sabre on the floor. "All is lost!"

"Wretch, thy cowardice hath destroyed us!" yelled the fierce Coffinhal, as he hurled the coward from the window.

Calm as despair stands the stern St. Just; the palsied Couthon crawls, grovelling, beneath the table; a shot—an explosion! Robespierre would destroy himself! The trembling hand has mangled, and failed to kill! The clock of the *Hôtel de Ville* strikes the third hour. Through the battered door, along the gloomy passages, into the Death-hall, burst the crowd. Mangled, livid, blood-stained, speechless, but not unconscious, sits haughty yet, in his seat erect, the Master-Murderer! Around him they throng—they hoot—they execrate! Their faces gleaming in the tossing torches! *He*, and not the starry Magian, the *real* Sorcerer! And round *his* last hours gather the Fiends he raised!

They drag him forth! Open thy gates, inexorable prison! The Conciergerie receives its prey! Never a word again on earth spoke Maximilien Robespierre! Pour forth thy thousands, and tens of thousands, emancipated Paris! To the *Place de la Révolution* rolls the tumbril of the King of Terror—St. Just, Dumas, Couthon—his companions to the grave! A woman—a childless woman, with hoary hair, springs to his side: "Thy death makes me drunk with joy!" He opened his

bloodshot eyes: "Descend to hell, with the curses of wives and mothers!"

The headsmen wrench the rag from the shattered jaw! A shriek, and the crowd laugh, and the axe descends amidst the shout of the countless thousands. And blackness rushes on thy soul, Maximilien Robespierre! So ended the Reign of Terror.

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Daylight in the prison. From cell to cell they hurry with the news; crowd upon crowd: the joyous captives mingled with the very gaolers, who, for fear, would fain seem joyous too; they stream through the dens and alleys of the grim house they will shortly leave. They burst into a cell, forgotten since the previous morning. They found there a young female sitting upon her wretched bed; her arms crossed upon her bosom, her face raised upward; the eyes unclosed, and a smile of more than serenity, of bliss upon her lips. Even in the riot of their joy, they drew back in astonishment and awe. Never had they seen life so beautiful; and as they crept nearer, and with noiseless feet, they saw that the lips breathed not, that the repose was of marble, that the beauty and the ecstasy were of death. They gathered round in silence; and lo! at her feet there was a young infant, who, wakened by their tread, looked at them steadfastly, and with its rosy fingers played with its dead mother's robe. An orphan there in the dungeon vault!

"Poor one!" said a female (herself a parent), "And they say the father fell yesterday; and now, the mother! Alone in the world, what can be its fate?"

The infant smiled fearlessly on the crowd, as the woman spoke thus. And the old Priest, who stood amongst them, said gently: "Woman, see! the orphan smiles! THE FATHERLESS ARE THE CARE OF GOD!"

NOTE.

THE curiosity which Zanoni has excited among those who think it worth while to dive into the subtler meanings they believe it intended to convey, may excuse me in adding a few words, not in explanation of its mysteries, but upon the principles which permit them. Zanoni is not, as some have supposed, an allegory; but beneath the narrative it relates, *typical* meanings are concealed. It is to be regarded in two characters, distinct yet harmonious—First, that of the simple and objective fiction, in which (once granting the license of the author to select a subject which is, or appears to be, preternatural) the reader judges the writer by the usual canons; viz., by the consistency of his characters under such admitted circumstances, the interest of his story, and the coherence of his plot; of the work regarded in this view, it is not my intention to say anything, whether in exposition of the design, or in defence of the execution. No typical meanings (which, in plain terms, are but moral suggestions, more or less numerous, more or less subtle) can afford just excuse to a writer of fiction, for the errors he should avoid in the most ordinary novel. We have no right to expect the most ingenious reader to search for the inner meaning, if the obvious course of the narrative be tedious and displeasing. It is, on the contrary, in proportion as we are satisfied with the objective sense of a work of imagination, that we are inclined to search into its depths for the more secret intentions of the author. Were we not so divinely charmed with "Faust," and "Hamlet," and "Prometheus," so ardently carried on by the interest of the story told to the common understanding, we should trouble ourselves little with the types in each which all of us can detect, none of us can elucidate – none elucidate, for the essence of type is mystery. We behold the figure, we cannot lift the veil. The Author himself is not called upon to explain what he designed. An Allegory is a personation of distinct and definite things—Virtues or Qualities—and the key can be given easily; but a writer who conveys typical meanings may express them in myriads. He cannot disentangle all the hues which commingle into the light he seeks to cast upon truth; and therefore the great masters of this enchanted soil—Fairy land of Fairy land—Poetry embedded beneath Poetry—wisely leave to each mind to guess at such truths as best please or instruct it. To have asked Goethe to explain the "Faust" would have entailed as complex and puzzling an answer as to have asked Mephistopheles to explain what is beneath the earth we tread on. The stores beneath may differ for every passenger; each step may require a new description: and what is treasure to the geologist may be rubbish to the miner. Six worlds may lie under a sod, but to the common eye they are but six layers of stone.

Art in itself, if not necessarily typical, is essentially a suggester of something subtler than that which it embodies to the sense. What Pliny tells us of a great painter of old, is true of most great painters: "their works express something beyond the works"—"more felt than understood." This belongs to the concentration of intellect which high Art demands, and which, of all the Arts, Sculpture best illustrates. Take Thorwaldsen's Statue of Mercury; it is but a single figure, yet it tells to those conversant with Mythology a whole legend. The god has removed the pipe from his lips, because he has lulled already the Argus, whom you do not see, to sleep. He is pressing his heel against his sword, because the moment is come when he may slay his victim. Apply the principle of this noble concentration of Art to the moral writer; he, too, gives to your eye but a single figure; yet each attitude, each expression, may refer to events and truths you must have the learning to remember, the acuteness to penetrate, or the imagination to conjecture. But to a classical judge of sculpture, would not the exquisite pleasure of discovering the all not told in Thorwaldsen's masterpiece be destroyed if the artist had engraved in detail his meaning at the base of the statue? Is it not the same with the typical sense which the artist in words conveys? The pleasure of divining Art in each is the noble exercise of all by whom Art is worthily regarded.

We of the humbler race not unreasonably shelter ourselves under the Authority of the Masters, on whom the world's judgment is pronounced; and great names are cited, not with the arrogance of equals, but with the humility of inferiors.

The author of Zanoni gives, then, no key to mysteries, be they trivial or important, which may be found in the secret chambers by those who lift the tapestry from the wall; but out of the many solutions of the main enigma—if enigma, indeed, there be—which have been sent to him, he ventures to select the one which he subjoins, from the ingenuity and thought which it displays, and from respect for the distinguished writer (one of the most eminent our time has produced) who deemed him worthy of an honor he is proud to display. He leaves it to the reader to agree with, or dissent from, the explanation. "A hundred men," says the old Platonist, "may read the book by the help of the same lamp, yet all may differ on the text; for the lamp only lights the characters—the mind must divine the meaning." The object of a Parable is not that of a Problem; it does not seek to convince, but to suggest. It takes the thought below the surface of the understanding to the deeper intelligence which the world rarely tasks. It is not sunlight on the water, it is a hymn chanted to the Nymph who hearkens and awakes below.

"ZANONI EXPLAINED.

BY ——."

Mejnour—Contemplation of the Actual—SCIENCE. Always old, and must last as long as the Actual. Less fallible than Idealism, but less practically potent, from its ignorance of the human heart.

Zanoni—Contemplation of the Ideal,—IDEALISM. Always necessarily sympathetic: lives by enjoyment; and is therefore typified by eternal youth.* Idealism is the potent Interpreter and Prophet of the Real; but its powers are impaired in proportion to their exposure to human passion.

Viola—Human INSTINCT. (Hardly worthy to be called LOVE, as Love would not forsake its object at the bidding of Superstition.) Resorts, first, in its aspiration after the Ideal, to tinsel shows; then relinquishes these for a higher love; but is still, from the conditions of its nature, inadequate to this, and liable to suspicion and mistrust. Its greatest force (Maternal Instinct) has power to penetrate some secrets, to trace some movements of the Ideal, but, too feeble to command them, yields to Superstition: sees sin where there is none, while committing sin, under a false guidance; weakly seeking refuge amidst the very tumults of the warring passions of the Actual, while deserting the serene Ideal; pining, nevertheless, in the absence of the Ideal, and expiring (not perishing, but becoming transmuted) in the aspiration after having the laws of the two natures reconciled.

(It might best suit popular apprehension to call these three the Understanding, the Imagination, and the Heart.)

Child—NEW-BORN INSTINCT, while trained and informed by Idealism, promises a preter-human result by its early, incommunicable vigilance and intelligence, but is compelled, by inevitable orphanhood, and the one-half of the laws of its existence, to lapse into ordinary conditions.

Aidon-Ai—FAITH, which manifests its splendor, and delivers its oracles, and imparts its marvels, only to the higher moods of the soul, and whose directed antagonism is with FEAR; so that those who employ the resources of Fear must dispense with those of Faith. Yet aspiration holds open a way of restoration, and may summon Faith, even when the cry issues from beneath the yoke of Fear.

Dweller of the Threshold—FEAR (or HORROR), from whose ghastliness men are protected by the opacity of the region of Prescription and Custom. The moment this protection is relinquished, and the human spirit pierces the cloud, and enters alone on the unexplored regions of Nature, this Natural Horror haunts it, and is to be successfully encountered only by defiance,—by aspiration towards, and reliance on, the Former and Director of Nature, whose Messenger and Instrument of re-assurance is Faith.

Mervale—CONVENTIONALISM.

Nicot—Base, grovelling, malignant PASSION.

Glyndon—UNSUSTAINED ASPIRATION: Would follow Instinct, but is deterred by Conventionalism; is overawed by Idealism, yet attracted, and transiently inspired; but has not steadiness for the initiatory contemplation of the Actual. He conjoins its snatched privileges with a besetting sensualism, and suffers at once from the horror of the one, and the disgust of the other, involving the innocent in the fatal conflict of his spirit. When on the point of perishing, he is rescued by Idealism; and, unable to rise to that species of existence, is grateful to be replunged into the region of the Familiar, and takes up his rest henceforth in Custom. (Mirror of Young Manhood.)

* "I do not understand the making Idealism less undying (on this scene of existence) than Science."—COMMENTATOR.—Because, granting the above premises, Idealism is more subjected than Science to the Affections, or to Instinct, because the Affections, sooner or later, force Idealism into the Actual, and in the Actual its immortality departs. The only absolutely Actual portion of the work is found in the concluding scenes that depict the Reign of Terror. The introduction of this part was objected to by some as out of keeping with the fanciful portions that preceded it. But if the writer of the solution has rightly shown or suggested the intention of the author, the most strongly and rudely actual scene of the age in which the story is cast was the necessary and harmonious completion of the whole. The excesses and crimes of Humanity are the grave of the Ideal.—AUTHOR.

ARGUMENT.

Human existence, subject to, and exempt from, ordinary conditions—(Sickness, Poverty, Ignorance, Death).

Science is ever striving to carry the most gifted beyond ordinary conditions; the result being as many victims as efforts, and the striver being finally left a solitary—for his object is unsuitable to the natures he has to deal with.

The pursuit of the Ideal involves so much emotion as to render the Idealist vulnerable by human passion—however long and well guarded, still vulnerable—liable, at last, to an union with Instinct. Passion obscures both Insight and Forecast. All effort to elevate Instinct to Idealism is abortive, the laws of their being not coinciding (in the early stage of the existence of the one). Instinct is either alarmed, and takes refuge in Superstition or Custom, or is left helpless to human charity, or given over to providential care.

Idealism, stripped of insight and forecast, loses its serenity, becomes subject once more to the horror from which it had escaped, and by accepting its aids, forfeits the higher help of Faith:—aspiration, however, remaining still possible; and, thereby, slow restoration; and also, SOMETHING BETTER.

Summoned by aspiration, Faith extorts from Fear itself the saving truth to which Science continues blind, and which Idealism itself hails as its crowning acquisition,—the inestimable PROOF wrought out by all labors and all conflicts.

Pending the elaboration of this proof, *Conventionalism* plods on, safe and complacent:
Selfish Passion perishes, grovelling and hopeless;
Instinct sleeps, in order to a loftier waking: and
Idealism learns, as its ultimate lesson, that self-sacrifice is true redemption; that the region beyond the grave is the fitting one for exemption from mortal conditions; and that Death is the everlasting portal, indicated by the finger of God,—the broad avenue, through which man does not issue, solitary and stealthy, into the region of Free Existence, but enters triumphant, hailed by a hierarchy of immortal natures.

The result is (in other words), THAT THE UNIVERSAL HUMAN LOT IS, AFTER ALL, THAT OF THE HIGHEST PRIVILEGE.

THE END.

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